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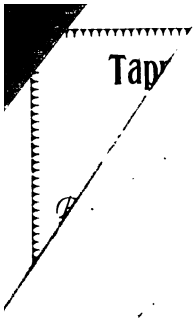
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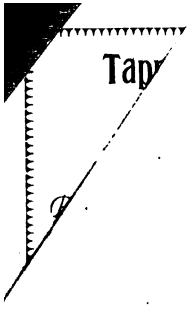

LECTURES
ON
SCRIPTURE HISTORY.

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LECTURES

ON

Scripture History,

DESIGNED PARTICULARLY FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF YOUNG PERSONS *IN INDIA.*

BY THE REV. ROBERT MAY,
MISSIONARY,
AND
Author of "LECTURES TO THE YOUNG."

WITH A PREFACE,
BY THE REV. HENRY TOWNLEY.

VOL. II.

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LECTURES.

LECTURE XXV.

ESAU AND JACOB: OR, THE TWIN BROTHERS.

GEN. 25. 27. *And the boys grew, and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.*

YOU have already heard the history of Cain and Abel, the two first brethren that ever lived in the world. We have in the latter part of this Chapter a brief account of two brethren whose characters very much resemble that of Cain and Abel. There was this difference only between Cain and Esau; that Esau only said in his heart, "the days of mourning of my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob." Whereas you

 have

have already heard that "Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him."

Let us now attend,

I. To the GENERAL CHARACTERS of ESAU and JACOB.

1. We will begin with Esau, because he is the eldest. His name, ESAU, means *red*; which was given him from his colour when he was born, having red hair on his body. Esau likewise signifies made or formed. By which it was intimated that he was a remarkable, strong, healthy child, even from his birth. It was intended to shew that he he had a very strong constitution, and, as might be expected, he became a very strong, daring active man. Esau was of a sanguine disposition, and his posterity, the Edomites, always cherished a most cruel and bloody hatred towards the Israelites.

It is also said, "and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field." He was a famous sportsman, like Nimrod; he was a mighty hunter, quite a man of the world. Hunting the beasts

of

of the forest with great skill and success. He was a gentleman and a soldier—for afterwards we find him meeting his brother with four hundred men. Recreation seems to have been his whole business; he studied the art of it; and spent all his time in it. He did not like to be confined in the tent to sit down and read his book, but was a man of the field, who spent his time in pursuit of game.

2. Let us now hear what is said of Jacob." "And Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents." His name, Jacob, means a supplanter, one that turns out and displaces another, one that trips up the heels of another either by force or fraud. Jacob supplanted his brother Esau when he obtained the birthright from him, by giving him a mess of pottage, and when he obtained his father's blessing by appearing to be Esau.

He also wrestled with the Angel, and prevailed on him for a blessing.

He is said to be a plain man, a man that was honest and fair in his dealings. A man that preferred the pleasures of solitude and retirement before the pleasures of the chace, or the sports of the field. He seems chiefly

to have resided at home in his early years. Jacob was a simple hearted man, who seems to have employed himself in rearing and attending the flocks and herds of his father Isaac. He dwelt in tents, either as a shepherd or a student. Some think he frequented the tents of Melchizedek or Heber, to receive instruction in divine things.

II. We cannot help noticing the PARTIALITY of their PARENTS.

"And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob."

There is a reason assigned why Isaac loved Esau, but none why Rebekah loved Jacob. The reason why Isaac loved Esau, was because he did eat of his venison; Was this a sufficient reason why he should prefer Esau to Jacob? By no means. There ought to have been no difference made between these two boys, because they were twins, they were both born at one time, and therefore Esau was not a firstborn son, nor Jacob a younger son. It is usual for parents to love the youngest best. They had but these two children, and yet both the parents made a difference in their affection towards

towards them. Esau was his father's favorite; and Jacob was his mother's darling. It was very wrong in Isaac and Rebekah to make any difference in their love, they ought to have loved them both alike. When Isaac went out into the field, it was to meditate and to pray, but when Esau went into the field, it was to hunt for venison. He knew how to please his father, and therefore treated him often with a savory dish. This showed his respect for his father, and gained him the affections of the good old man. He won his father's heart by hunting and bringing him the game which he caught. This was certainly a fault in Isaac; so that we see the best of men have their infirmities.

"Rebekah loved Jacob." She seems to have been mindful of the word of God, which had given the preference to Jacob. She therefore preferred him in her love. Parents ought to love those children whom God loves, because they are the best children. If therefore it be lawful to make a difference between children on any account, Rebekah was more excusable than Isaac, because she loved him whom God loved. She chose him whom the

Lord had chosen. If Jacob had not loved God, his mother would not have been so fond of him.

II. We proceed to relate how Esau sold his BIRTHRIGHT to Jacob for a mess of RED POTTAGE.

"And Jacob sod pottage, and Esau came from the field and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, feed me I pray thee, with that same red pottage, for I am faint; therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, behold I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do me? And Jacob said, swear to me this day; and he sweat unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of entiles;* and he did eat and drink, and rose up and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright."

The birthright had many and great privileges annexed to it. The firstborn was next in

* Lentiles, a kind of grain or pulse like pease or *dhall*, of which they make a coarse kind of food used by mourners." See Brown's Dict. Vol. 2, Page 93.

in honor and dignity to the parents. The firstborn had a double portion allotted to him. He succeeded to the government of the family in the kingdom. The firstborn was consecrated to the Lord. It was therefore a matter of the highest regard. This birthright Esau despised, and for it is called a profane person,* who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright: "For ye know (saith the Apostle) that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

Jacob desired the birthright; he coveted earnestly the best gifts. He desired earnestly the blessings promised to Abraham and his seed, especially that of Christ, and his salvation, which was included in them. Jacob was one day boiling pottage for his dinner, and was sitting down with his frugal meal, for he lived chiefly on herbs, when his brother came in weary, hungry and faint. He had probably been toiling all day and had caught nothing. He had a great desire to eat of Jacob's

* Heb. 12. 16, 17.

cob's pottage, and the color of it seems to have taken his fancy, and he desired it the more on that account. The color was like himself, red, on this account he was afterwards, by way of reproach, called Edom, red. Jacob proposed to his brother to sell his birthright to him. He knew how little his brother valued a privilege which he so much desired, but it was not right of him to take advantage of his brother's necessity. Esau said, behold I am at the point to die, which means, I am going towards death: because he could not die for want of food, there was no doubt plenty to eat in his father's tent. No, he must have some of Jacob's pottage, and when he said these words he seems to have meant, "I shall never live to inherit Canaan, or any of the future supposed blessing, and what signifies who has them when I am dead and gone. I cannot live upon promises, give me something to eat and drink, for to-morrow I die." When Jacob found him so indifferent about the matter, to make the bargain sure, he would not part with his pottage, till he had bound his brother by an oath to confirm the birthright to him. And Jacob said, swear unto me

this

this day, and he swear unto him: and he sold his birthright to Jacob. Jacob is said to be a plain man, and Esau a cunning hunter, but Jacob was wiser than his brother, for surely no one could have made a more foolish, sinful bargain than Esau did. He ate and drank, rose up and went his way, and thought no more about the matter. He made no attempt to revoke the bargain, or recover the blessings he had lost. He made no appeal to his parents. No entreaty that his brother would absolve him from his oath. In his necessity he made the bargain, and his neglect, contempt and profaneness confirmed his own words, that he cared little or nothing about the matter. Well may Esau be called a profane person, who "thus despised his birthright."

IV. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What are the words of the Text? "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents."

2. What is the meaning of Esau's name? Red, *made*, full formed.

3. What is the meaning of Jacob's name?

Supplanter, one that gets the place of another by force or fraud.

4. Who did Isaac love best? Esau, because he did eat of his venison.

5. Who did Rebekah love best? Jacob, because he was beloved of God.

6. When Esau came from the field, faint and hungry, what was Jacob doing? And Jacob sod pottage.

7. What did Esau say to Jacob? Feed me I, pray thee, with that same red pottage, for I am *faint*.

8. What answer did Jacob make? And Jacob said, sell me this day thy birthright.

9. Did Esau do what Jacob desired? Yea, and confirmed it by an oath.

10. What is said of Jacob and Esau after the birthright was sold? Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles: and he ate and drank, and rose up and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

VI. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Let me say a few words to those who are twins. Love each other very much. Remember you are both equal in age. Some times twins

are

are so much alike that they can scarcely be known apart, the one from the other. Be equally kind and affectionate to each other as well as to your Parents. It is better to be a plain pious man like Jacob, than to be a profane careless hunter like Esau. It is better to be called a simple good child, than a clever wicked child, who loves only mischief. It is better to love school than to love to ramble about the fields. When you are going to school do not stay to hunt dogs, cats or sheep by the way. Hunting and shooting are dangerous sports, and the less they are practised the better. If it is merely for diversion it is very cruel sport. What pleasure can there be in killing a poor timid hare or in hunting a stag to death. Let parents take heed of shewing any partiality towards their children, of loving one more than another. Jacob felt the evil of this conduct very bitterly, yet strange to tell, he committed the same fault himself in loving Joseph above the rest of his children. Those are the wisest children who choose that good part which can never be taken away. Those that know the value of the blessings of the Gospel, will not part with

it for any price, much less for a mess of pottage. "A Spanish Boy, who was a Catholic, having a silver crucifix hanging in his bosom, was asked by a person in his company to sell it for a Rupee. At which, he shook his head (meaning no). He was then offered two Rupees, to which he replied in broken accents, "No, not for tousands of tousands." This poor little Boy loved and adored this foolish trifle, he would not part with it for thousands.* Are there not many children in India as well as in Europe, who disregard the word of God, set no value on the Bible or on Christ and his salvation. These despise Christ, despise his people, and despise the holy name by which they are called. Take heed lest you should be rejected at the last day, for you will find no place for repentance in hell; you may seek it, but shall not find it, though you seek it carefully with tears. Repent for your past conduct, and as you are called Christian children, act like those who love and serve Jesus Christ. Amen.

A HYMN.

* See Youth's Magazine, vol. 6. p. 25.

A HYMN.

Brotherly Love.

BLEST are the sons of peace,
Whose hearts and hope are one,
Whose kind designs to serve and please
Thro' all their actions run.

Blest is the pious house,
Where zeal and friendship meet,
Their Songs of praise, their mingled vows,
Make their communion sweet.

Thus when on Aaron's head,
They poured the rich perfume,
The oil thro' all his garment spread,
And pleasure fill'd the room.

Thus on the heavenly hills,
The saints are blest above,
Where joy like morning dew distils,
And all the air is love.

Watts.

LECTURE

LECTURE XXVI.

JACOB OBTAINETH THE BLESSING.

GEN. 27. 35. 36. *And he said, thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, is he not rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and behold now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?*

THERE is in the last of these verses a reference made to the subject of the last Lecture. Esau has not however paid that strict regard to truth which we ought to expect. He says that Jacob took away his blessing, when the truth was that he had sold it to him, and confirmed the bargain by an oath. He reproached Jacob unjustly, as though he had robbed him of his birthright, when he had fairly sold it to him, and therefore whatever might be said of Jacob's conduct in thus taking away the blessing, he had no reason to complain. "In the account of the

the life of Hilarion, a Hermit, and esteemed as a very holy man, it is said that for three years he only ate about a SEER* of lentiles, moistened with cold water, and for other three years only dry bread with salt and some water. This shows that the eating of lentiles, was thought to be poor living. It shows also in a very striking manner the profaneness of Esau who despised his birthright to such a degree as to part with it, for a mess of lentile pottage.†

1. We notice the DESIGN of ISAAC to BLESS ESAU. "And it came to pass that when Isaac was old and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, my son: and he said unto him, Behold here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field and take me some venison; and make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to

* About two pounds.

† Harmer's Observations, vol. 3. p. 92.

to me; that my soul may bless thee before I die. And Rebekah heard when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it."

Isaac was now 137 years old, and though his eyes were dim so that he could not see, yet he lived above 40 years longer. His partiality for Esau and the custom of the eldest son being the heir, led him to forget or disregard the answer which the Lord had formerly given to Rebekah, when he said, before Esau and Jacob were born, that "the elder should serve the younger." He seems to have been led astray by an over fond affection to a disobedient and rebellious son, whose conduct had grieved his own mind as well as that of Rebekah. He was going to prefer the order of Nature to the will of God. Esau must go a hunting and bring him some venison, that by receiving a fresh proof of his duty and affection, he might bless him with all his heart. This was more than a common blessing. He must be strengthened and refreshed. Isaac is said to have loved Esau on account of his venison, and now he desires a savoury dish before he

gave

gave him the blessing which belonged to the birthright.

II. REBEKAH'S PLAN to obtain the BLESSING for ISAAC.

Rebekah told Jacob what his father had said to Esau. "Now therefore (said Rebekah to Jacob,) my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father such as he loveth, and thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death." This was very wrong indeed in Rebekah to act in this manner; she ought to have gone to Isaac and told him how wrong it was in him to let his partiality for Esau make him forget the word of the Lord, and at the same time she ought to have reminded him that Esau by selling his birthright to Jacob, had lost his right to the blessing which belonged to it, and which belonged to him as the elder son. We do not hear Jacob telling his mother how wrong it was in her thus to impose upon his Father, but he declared his fear that his Father would detect him

and

and find out the cheat. "Behold (said Jacob) Esau my brother is an hairy man, and I am a smooth man; my father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver, and I shall bring a curse upon me and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice." She seems quite confident of success. Jacob went and did as his mother told him, and she prepared the savoury meat and took a suit of Esau's clothes and put them on Jacob, and she put the skins of the kids upon his hands and upon the smooth of his neck, and gave the savoury meat and bread which she had prepared into the hand of her son Jacob.

III. We now come to JACOB'S MANAGEMENT of his MOTHER'S PLAN.

Rebekah had made him, who was a smooth man, hairy by putting on him the skins of those young goats with which she had made the savoury meat. He brought this meat to Isaac, and when he entered the place where his father was, he says, My Father. Isaac heard his voice, and thinking

thinking it was not the voice of Esau, he said, who art thou, my son. And Jacob said unto his Father, I am Esau thy firstborn. I have done as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. Isaac still doubted, and said, how is it that thou hast found it so soon. And he said, because the Lord thy God brought it to me. O Jacob, what a falsehood! Surely Jacob did not then know his Father's God. He had no real or abiding sense of religion on his mind at this time. How could Jacob dare to bring the name of God into this lie. His father was not willing to trust his hearing alone. Isaac is not satisfied with the voice; for he said "come near I pray thee and let me feel thee, whether thou be my very son Esau or not, and when he had felt his hands, being deceived by the hairy skins of the goats, he said, the voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are Esau's hands:" still he had his doubts, and having nothing to depend on but the word of Jacob, he once more said unto him, Art thou my very son Esau: and he said, I am. He then desired him to bring the savoury meat to him. I will eat, said Isaac,

of

of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee.

How could Jacob say he was Esau his father's firstborn, when he was Jacob the younger son. How could he say he had done as his father bade him, when he had followed his mother's commands and not his father's. How could he say it was his venison when it came from the fold, and not the field. Above all, how could he say, that the Lord had brought it to him, when he himself went and fetched the kids to his mother. How could Jacob tell so many stories, and after all bring in the name of the Lord. Was he not afraid that the Lord whom he had mocked and insulted, would punish him. This was not like Jacob, a plain man, but he was Jacob the deceiver, the liar. These things, my dear young friends, are not written for your imitation, but for your admonition and instruction. Beware of the first lie, which is often the cause of many more. Jacob obtains the blessing in a very sinful manner. He had indeed reason to fear his father's curse, his brother's anger, and the wrath of God. Jacob sets the venison before his father, and he did eat, and he brought him wine,

and

and he drank. After the dinner was over, then comes the promised blessing. Thinking that it must be Esau, his father proceeds to pronounce the blessing. Let us therefore,

IV. Attend to the BLESSING which ISAAC GAVE to JACOB.

"And his father Isaac said unto him, come near now, and kiss me, my son, and he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed. Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be Lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be every one that blesseth thee."

He kissed him in token of peculiar affection; he praised him on account of the smell of his garment, which was like that of fragrant flowers and spices. Isaac first prayed for him and then prophesied concerning him. Jacob is blessed with three things, "PLENTY, POWER and

PREVALENCY

PREVALENCY WITH GOD." That is, intimating that he should have great influence by prayer with the Lord. "Let God be a friend to all thy frends, and an enemy to all thy enemies." "Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." This appears only to be a general blessing, nothing is said of the promises and mercies which is included in the covemnt God made with Abraham, because there were things which Esau had despised. Isaac thought he was blessing Esau and not Jacob. How great must have been his surprize to find that he had been imposed upon and cheated.—We must therefore now listen,

V. TO ISAAC'S ASTONISHMENT and ESAU'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

"And it came to pass that as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made savory meat and brought it to his father: and he said unto his father, let my father arise and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said unto him,

him, Who art thou? And he said I am thy Son, thy firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly and said, Who? Where is he that hath taken venison and brought it to me before thou camest and I have blessed him? Yea, and he shall be blessed." The good old man was at first angry with Jacob, but having reflected that what he had now done unknowingly ought to have been done willingly and cheerfully, confirms the blessing. These last words affected Esau very much, indeed his disappointment and anguish of mind was very great. "And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, behold I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants! and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my Son. And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice and wept." Esau wept, but his tears could not absolve him from his oath. They could not wash from his memory that he had

had sold his birthright to his brother Jacob, and with it the blessing also. Still, see how desirous he is of a blessing, if it be only one, and that a common one, any blessing is better than none at all. It is better to have a light blessing than a heavy curse. How many wish to die like the righteous; but do not like to live as they do. Many will ask the wise virgins for oil when their own lamps are gone out, but they will find that the wise have none to spare. Be wise betimes. Seek heavenly wisdom, seek divine grace, seek pardon, peace and holiness through Christ alone. Seek, and ye shall find, ask, and it shall be given.

Esau asked his father for a blessing, and he gave him one. "And Isaac his father said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass that when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck."

V. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What are the words of the Text? *Read them.*

2.

2. Why did Isaac ask Esau to go for venison, that he might eat and bless him before he died? Because he was old, and knew not the day of his death.

3. Who was it that overheard Isaac speak to Esau? Rebekah.

4. What did Rebekah tell Jacob to do? To go and fetch two good kids that she might make savory meat, that Isaac might eat and bless Jacob.

5. When Jacob said that his father would find him, and he should bring a curse on his head and and not a blessing, what did Rebekah say? Upon me be thy curse, my son.

6. How many falsehoods did Jacob tell in order to obtain the blessing?

No less than five LIES.

(1) That he was Esau the first born. (2) That he has done what his father told him. (3) That it was his venison. (4) That the Lord God of his father had brought it to him. (5) And that he was indeed his very son Esau.

7. Which was the most wicked? That where he said, because the Lord thy God brought it to me.

8. Did he obtain the blessing? Yes.

9. When he was just gone from the presence of his father, what happened? Esau his brother came in from hunting, and brought savory meat to his father, in order that he might eat and bless him.

10. When Isaac found what he had done, how did he feel? He trembled very exceedingly, but confirmed the blessing he had given.

VI. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

My dear young friends—You are all like Isaac. I do not mean that you are old and blind and cannot see, but I mean that you know not the day of your death. How desirable it is to be prepared for death. The grace of God alone can prepare you for that solemn hour. You must not do evil that good may come. The method which Rebekah and Jacob used to obtain the blessing, was sinful and wicked. You must not imitate them. Their conduct cannot be excused. Jacob was guilty of so many real falsehoods that every one must hate and despise the deceitful means by which he obtained the blessing. The example of Jacob should teach you never to step aside

side from the path of truth and sincerity, one lie makes way for another, and how many lies must be told to hide the first. The conduct of Rebekah was still more blameable than that of Jacob, even allowing she had a good end in view. She proposes and recommends the plan of deceiving Isaac, and offers to take the whole blame on herself. She acted her part and Jacob acted his, and both acted very badly. How many parents there are who imitate Rebekah by training up their children in the arts of lying and deceit, for the sake of a little wordly advantage. The Hindoos think falsehood and deceit are not sins. They think it an honor to excell in cheating. Their Shaster permits a man to tell a lie if it is to save the life of a Bramin, or to appease an angry wife. It is allowed also if it is to save his own life or the goods in his house from being spoiled. But you are not to tell lies for peace sake, nor yet to tell only half the truth when the telling of the whole would be better. The truth may be told in such a manner as to do all the harm and mischief of a lie. How ready and quick was Jacob with those lying answers to the questions of his father Isaac. Take heed, my dear

dear young friends, of Lying.——————Imitate

"THE LITTLE BOY THAT COULD NOT TELL A LIE."

"When George Washington was about six years old, some one made him a present of a hatchet; of which, like most children, he was very fond. He went about chopping every thing that came in his way. Going into the garden he cut an English cherry tree, so much that there was but little hope that the tree would live. The next morning his father saw the tree, which was a great favorite, in that condition, and enquired who it was that had been so mischievous. He declared that he would not have taken 40 rupees for that tree. No one could tell him who had cut the cherry tree. Presently after George came with his hatchet in his hand. George, said his father, do you know who killed that beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden. The child was silent for a moment, and then nobly replied, "I cannot tell a lie, Papa. You know I cannot tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet. Run to my arms! my boy, cried his father. Run to my arms. Glad am I George that you killed my cherry tree, for you have paid me for it

a thousand fold! Such an act of greatness in my son, is of more worth than a thousand cherry trees, though blossomed of silver and their fruits of gold."* Go, my children, imitate George Washington. Never tell a lie—God is one that cannot lie, and he will bless those that love the truth.

* See Evan. Mag. for 1813, page 100.

A HYMN.

A HYMN.

Against Lying.

O 'tis a lovely thing for youth,
To walk betimes in wisdom's way;
To fear a lie, to speak the truth,
That we may trust to all they say.

But liars we can never trust,
Though they should speak the thing that's true;
For he that does one fault at first
And lies to hide it, makes it two.

The Lord delights in them that speak
The words of truth; but ev'ry liar
Must have his portion in the lake
That burns with brimstone and with fire.

Then let me always watch my lips,
Lest I be struck to death and hell,
For God a book of reck'ning keeps
For ev'ry lie that Children tell. *Watts.*

LECTURE

LECTURE XXVII.

JACOB'S DREAM.

GEN. 28. 12. *And he dreamed and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the Angels of God ascending and descending on it.*

YOU have heard how and in what manner Jacob obtained the blessing. Now you shall hear some of the consequences of his sinful deception. His brother Esau was so angry that he threatened to kill him. And Esau hated Jacob, because of the blessing wherewith his Father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, the days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob. And these words of Esau, her eldest son, were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, proposing to kill thee. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice, and arise, flee thou to Laban, my brother,

brother, to Haram; and tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done unto him: then I will send and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day.

Here we see some of the bitter fruits of Rebekah's bad plan. She must part with her beloved Jacob, in order to save his life. Instead of a few days, Jacob was 20 years with Laban, and Rebekah never saw him again in this world. Esau's hatred to Jacob was like that of Cain's to Abel, he hated him because God loved him. Nothing could comfort Esau but the hope of murder, and as Isaac had talked of dying, he thought his father could not live much longer, and it was not worth while to grieve his father, when he had but a few days to live. That Isaac would soon be dead, and then Jacob's murder would be no grief to him. It seems he not only thought this in his heart, but had been heard to say what he would do to Jacob, and his words were told to his mother, for whom he appears to have had no regard. If Jacob had been slain by his brother, Esau's life was also forfeited by the laws of God,

God, and he also must die; she would therefore, as she said, be deprived of them both in one day. Before Jacob set out to Haram, Rebekah communicated her wishes to Isaac that Jacob might go to her brother's family and choose for himself a wife, as she did not wish to distress her husband's mind by telling him the true reason of Jacob's departure. For the wives which Esau had taken were a great grief to her and Isaac. Jacob is therefore called by his father and sent away with a solemn charge and blessing. "And Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughter of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people. And give the blessing of Abraham to thee and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger which God gave unto Abraham."

His calling Jacob implies that he was reconciled

conciled to him, and his blessing him shews that he was quite satisfied in what he had done without design; nay more, the blessing is enlarged and confirmed in the name of the Almighty God; the God of Abraham and Isaac. Abraham's name is twice mentioned here, which was not the case before. His charging him not to take a wife from among the daughters of Canaan, shews that he was anxious that Jacob should act worthy of that blessing which he had received, and had now been doubly given him, And Jacob went out from Beersheba and went towards Haran. The departure of Jacob was painful and humiliating; and well it might, such are the consequences of sin. The parting scene between Jacob and his father was very tender and affectionate, but when he came to part with his beloved mother, it must have been still more tender,

What Isaac had done had some effect on Esau's mind, finding that he was to be left heir of all the substance of his father, and that as Jacob was gone, he took a third wife, to please his father, not to please God. This was good, but it was too late. Esau should have done

done this before. We must please God and man. If all the world smile upon you and God is angry, you cannot be happy. The prosperity of the wicked is cursed.

I. Notice the PLACE where JACOB had this DREAM.

Jacob went towards Haran, which was more than 400 miles from his father's tent. We see him journeying alone without a single servant to attend him. No horse to ride, in order to lessen the fatigues of his journey. No camels, though his father no doubt had camels. He travelled all the way on foot. He fled as it were for his life, and the time of his departure as well as the path he took, were no doubt carefully concealed from Esau, though by some means or other he heard of the object of his journey. It appears that he travelled about 40 miles the first day, for it is supposed that he had this dream the first night. He came to a certain place and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. It is said to have been a city, but it is supposed that Jacob did not enter the city, but lay in some shady place in the suburbs of the city. Sleeping in the open air and under the shade of trees is very

very common in Bengal. And he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. Jacob had but poor accommodations, the cold ground to lay on, the cold stones for his pillow, and the cold air to sleep in, but sleeping in the open air in this hot country is not so dangerous as in a cold one. We see here a picture of the manners of the country and the times in which Jacob lived. He was a plain man, and he could endure fatigue; all this was no hardship to Jacob. God took care of Jacob, though he lay exposed in the open air.

" His bed was earth, his raised pillow stones,
" On which poor Jacob rests his head and bones.
" Heaven was his canopy, the shades of night
" Were his drawn curtains to seclude the light,
" There God appear'd, that was his joy, his crown,
" God is not always seen on beds of down.
" Oh! if that God would please to make my bed,
" I care not where I rest my weary head;
" With thee my wants can never be extreme,
" With Jacob's pillow give me Jacob's dream."*

Let

* These lines were taken from the Sampler of a young lady at Salisbury. WILTS, ENGLAND.

Let me tell you,

II. JACOB'S DREAM.

"And he dreamed and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the Angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold the Lord stood above it and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west and to the east, and to the north and to the south, and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

This was a very remarkable and extraordinary dream, and almost every part of it is introduced with the word Behold! This is an interjection which commands attention. Do you hear this, all you who are inattentive, careless

and half asleep. Awake! Awake! Behold! Behold!

1. What Jacob saw.

He saw a ladder which reached from earth to heaven, angels ascending and descending, God at the top or head of this ladder. What a wonderful sight! The ladder represented the *Providence* of God, by which there is a continual intercourse or communication between heaven and earth. The counsels and works of God are executed on earth, and all that is done on earth is known in heaven. This ladder also points out to us that God does his work gradually. The designs of God in his providence are accomplished step by step, and not all at once. Angels are employed by God in executing the designs of God. They are active spirits and rest not day nor night, continually descending to execute the commands of God on earth, and ascending to bear a report of what they have done, and to receive new orders from the Almighty God, who is represented as being at the upper end of the ladder, directing and governing all their motions. The wisdom of God is seen in the manner in which he governs the

the world and rules over the inhabitants of the earth. This ladder also represents the mediation of Jesus Christ, through whom we have access by one Spirit to the Father. For there is one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus. Christ is the way, all God's blessings come to us through Christ, and all our services must go to him through Christ. We must offer up our prayers and seek for pardon in his name. All the kind offices which Angels perform are all owing to the Lord Jesus Christ. This vision must have been very comforting to Jacob's mind, to find that he was under the care and protection of his father's God, and that the Angels were his guard. He had a sight, a short and pleasing sight of that glory which was to be accomplished in his children's children.

2. What Jacob HEARD.

Jacob heard God speaking from the top of the ladder—Confirming and enlarging the blessing of his father, giving new promises, very precious, full of consolation and encouragement. Jacob had lately acted a very bad part, and if he was sensible of it he must have been very unhappy. He cannot feel that

peace of mind which he wished to enjoy. He was taking leave of Canaan, and knew not whether he should ever return, but God promised to give him the land whereon he slept, that it should be given to him and to his children, which he would know that he was only going to stay at Háran for a short time. God said he should have a numerous family, that those who descended from him should spread abroad to the west, east, north and south, and that all nations should be blessed in him; by which it was intimated that Christ Jesus, the desire of all Nations, should be born from among those who were to descend from him.

He had no doubt been thinking as he walked along, that he might possibly have many dangers and difficulties to encounter, that he was travelling in an unknown road to an unknown country, to persons who were strangers to him. He was also afraid of danger from Esau. But God graciously promised, that he would be with him to keep him in all places, and that he would bring him back again in safety to the land he was now leaving, that he would go with him and not leave him till he had brought

all

all these things to pass.—Let us now notice,

III. The EFFECTS of this DREAM on JACOB'S MIND.

"And Jacob awaked out of this sleep, and he said, surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the House of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Awaking from his sleep in the night time he seemed to be greatly impressed with his dream. Surely this can be no common dream. He is surprized at the tokens he had seen of the presence of God: surely God is in this place and I knew it not. He was afraid, there was a holy fear that took possession of his mind at the time. How dreadful is this place. I shall always remember it with reverence and fear. I shall have a respect for this place, my dream will make me remember it as long as I live. What he saw at this time made it appear that it was none other than the house of God, the place where the Lord lived; yea, he had seen it to be as the gate of heaven; as the entrance into that holy happy place where God, the holy Angels and good

men live after death. It seemed to him as if the Angels had met at the entrance of the holy city, and he saw them going out and coming in. Like travellers passing and repassing through the gates of a large city. This was a season much to be remembered and most probably the happiest period of his life. It is supposed by some that at this time, during this remarkable night, an important change took place in Jacob's character, that he now became acquainted with true religion and acted from this time upon right principles. Whether he slept any more that night or not, we cannot say; but we know that he rose up early in the morning. What he did and said I will tell you in the next Lecture.

IV. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What are the words of the Text? And he dreamed and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending upon it.

2. What did Jacob see at the top of this ladder? And behold the Lord stood above it.

3. What did the Lord say to Jacob? I

am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac.

4. Did he make any promise to Jacob concerning the ground on which he slept? The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed.

5. Was Jacob to have a numerous seed? And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth.

6. To what parts were they to extend? And they shall spread abroad to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south.

7. Was there any promise respecting Christ? Yes, "and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

7. What other promises did God make to Jacob? "And behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

9. When Jacob awaked out of his sleep what did he say? "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not."

10. How did Jacob feel? "And he was afraid and said, how dreadful is this place!

This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

V. Practical Address.

There are many who make themselves needlessly unhappy on account of dreams. There are such a variety of dreams that it is impossible to describe them all. Night dreams are very different from each other, and some may admit of a peculiar interpretation. Some dreams are full of terror and confusion, others are pleasant and delightful. How a person dreams we cannot easily tell. Some persons have had very remarkable dreams which have left a deep impression upon their minds, which have not only led to a change of conduct but a change of heart. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumbering upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."—Jacob's dream was full of instruction, full of consolation and encouragement to a man in his circumstances, and we find that it made a very deep impression upon his mind. He remembered it all his life. It is likely he never had

such

such a sweet sleep or such a remarkable dream afterwards. Children may have to travel alone as Jacob did, in an unknown road to an unknown place, without any one to bear them company, without any one to guide them by the way. They may be benighted. They may be obliged to lay down and sleep on the ground as Jacob did. Never mind, put your trust in Jacob's God, and though you may not have Jacob's dream to comfort and encourage you, yet you will have Jacob's God to protect you. Seek his protection and the pardon of all your sins through Jesus Christ, by earnest prayer, and then you may lie down and sleep as soundly and safely as if you were in a house surrounded by soldiers or servants to take care of you.

We ought to take notice of those dreams that warn us to repent of sin and seek for pardon. Disobedient children do not dream that they are obedient. Careless and inattentive children do not dream that they are attentive to their books or to the instructions of their parents and teachers. Lying children do not dream that they are tell-

ling the truth. No, they often dream that they are found out and punished for their falsehood and mischief. Wicked children are always terrified by their dreams. Good children sometimes dream of good things, that God loves them, that Christ smiles upon them, that they are going to heaven. I recollect when a boy about nine years of age, I dreamed that the day of Judgment was come, and I thought the Judge asked the person to whose school I then went, what sort of a boy I was? And he replied, I think he will do; or I think he will pass. I awoke in great fear, the dream made a deep impression on my mind. Wherever we are, we may meet with God. Jacob was surprised to find that God was there. He had no expectation of finding God there. God is every where,

Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,
You are surrounded still with God.
Let not your weaker passions dare
Consent to sin, for God is there. *Watts.*

Remember Jacob's dream, seek to have Jacob's God for your God. The Angels which he saw, for your guardian angels. Pray that God will be with you wherever you are. That he would

would be your guide and go with you wherever you go. That he would bring thee safe to heaven at last. That he may never eave thee, nor forsake thee in life or at death; in affliction or health, in poverty or prosperity. Pray that he may be your guide even unto death, and your God for ever and ever. Amen.

A HYMN.

Jacob's Ladder. Gen. 28. 12.

IF the Lord our leader be,
We may follow without fear,
East or West, by land or sea,
Home with him is ev'ry where.
When from Esau Jacob fled
Tho' his pillow was a stone,
And the ground his humble bed,
Yet he was not left alone.

Kings are often waking kept,
Rack'd with cares on beds of state,
Never king like Jacob slept,
For he lay at heaven's gate.
Lo! he saw a ladder rear'd,
Reaching to the heav'nly throne,
At the top the Lord appear'd,
Spake and claim'd him for his own.

Fear not, Jacob, thou art mine,
And my presence with thee goes;
On thy heart my love shall shine
And my arm subdue thy foes.
From my promise comfort take,
For my help in trouble call;
Never will I thee forsake
Till I have accomplish'd all. *Newton.*

(See Olney's Hymns.

LECTURE XXVIII.

JACOB'S VOW.

GEN. 28. 20. *And Jacob vowed a vow.*

THIS is the first vow that we read of in the Bible. It will therefore be proper to explain to you what a vow is. A vow is a promise made to God of doing some good thing hereafter. Vows are mentioned in many parts of the Bible, and there were several laws made for the right performance of different vows in us among the Jews. A man might devote himself or his children to the Lord. Samuel was vowed and set apart to the service of the Lord. He was offered to the Lord when he was yet a child, and at a very early age employed in the service of the Tabernacle. If a man or woman vowed themselves or their children to the Lord, they were obliged to remain firm to their promise, and with a steady and fixed mind to perform the work to which they had devoted themselves. If they did not act according to the conditions

conditions of the vow, they were to be redeemed:*

The vows and promises of children were void, they were not bound to perform their promises unless they were ratified and confirmed either by the express or silent consent of their parents.†

A vow when made by one who fears God and loves Christ, is either general or particular. Particular vows are those promises by which we bind ourselves and resolve by the strength and grace of God, to endeavor to leave some particular sin, or to perform some particular duty. A vow must be made deliberately and devoutly (not rashly) and with proper consideration. You must not vow that which you are not able to perform. The performance of vows is strictly enjoined in the Sacred Scriptures. "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow

* Lev. 27. 2. 3.

† Num. 30. 4.

vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform: even a free will offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth."* We shall first notice,

I. JACOB'S MONUMENT.

"And Jacob rose up early in the morning and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar and poured oil upon the top of it." This was the monument that Jacob set up. A stone, the stone on which he had laid his head, he placed it in an upright manner in the ground and poured oil upon it. The anointing or pouring oil upon stones was a ceremony much used in ancient times, and not then accounted superstitious or unlawful. In India stones are worshipped as gods. I have often passed trees under which these stones are placed, they are of different shapes and sizes. They are generally daubed with red, and you can see that oil has been poured on them. Flowers are offered to them. The Shalgramu is a sacred stone worshipped

* Deut. 23. 21, 22, 23.

worshipped by the Hindoos. It is said that one of these stones are sometimes sold for 2000 rupees.* The Lingu is another stone image that is worshipped as a god, and the Temples containing this image are to be seen in almost every Town and Village in Bengal. It is a very common object of worship. It is a smooth black stone cut in a particular shape, almost like a sugar loaf. The bottom part is something like the mouth of a spoon.† It is one part of the duty of a Bramin to anoint the stone images with oil before bathing.

Jacob had not time now to erect an altar here, therefore he set up this stone to mark the place that he might easily find it on his return.—He also gave a new name to the place. He called it BETH-EL, that is, the House of God. It seems it was near a city that was called Luz, which means an almond tree. Perhaps there were many of these trees in and about the city. The gracious appearance of God to Jacob, the vision which he saw and the

* See Ward's History of the Hindoos. vol. 2. page 221.

† See Page 15.

the words which he heard, made it much more remarkable than the almond trees which grew there. This was certainly a very suitable name. It was the place where God visited Jacob, and was therefore his house. Every place where the presence of God is enjoyed may be called a Bethel. There was a city of this name about 8, some say 12, miles from Jerusalem. It belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. This Bethel or House of God was afterwards called *Bethaven*, house of vanity or wickedness, the temple of Idols. Jeroboam set up one of his calves there, for the people to worship. This is that Jeroboam who made Israel to sin. Let us make the house in which we live a Bethel, a house for God. There are too many whose houses might be called Bethavens, houses of wickedness and iniquity, where God is insulted and forgotten.

II. Let us consider JACOB'S VOW.

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me and will keep me in this way which I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my

my God. And this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

This was Jacob's vow, let us try to explain it. We have here an example of the prayer of faith. God had promised to be with Jacob, to keep him and bring him back in safety: Jacob therefore lays hold of this promise. He makes use of the words which God had spoken to him, and says, If God will be thus with me and keep me, and provide for all my necessary wants and bring me home to my father's house again in peace, then in return I will be his forever. Jesus Christ hath told us to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all other necessary good shall be given us.* This was Jacob's way. First he asked for the presence and blessing of God, to keep near to him and protected by his power, and then he asked for food and raiment, and last of all that he might return in safety. Esau longed for the days of mourning that he might kill Jacob, but Jacob longed to

* Matt. 6. 33.

to be reconciled to his brother, and hoped to find his father alive at his return. Jacob here bound himself unto the Lord. He entered into a solemn engagement to serve the Lord.

We have in this Vow the *faith*, *piety*, and *moderation* of Jacob.

His faith was such that he trusted in the promise which God had made to him. He knew from what God had said to him that he would provide for him wherever he went and wherever he was. The promises of God should be the guide and measure of our expectations. Let us always remember that we have much more than we deserve. Behold his *piety* and regard to God. All his desire was that God would be with him and keep him. This will make us happy and contented. If God is with us, and we know that we are under his protection, when we are on a journey, how comfortable it is to have good company by the way. God and the holy Angels were with Jacob, what better companions could he desire. How happy those must feel, who when they journey in an unknown and dangerous country, have a good guide and a

good

good guard. Jacob had God for his guide and Angels for his guard. To be well provided on a journey, is another good thing to have provisions for the way. This God had promised, and this was all that Jacob desired to have, food to eat, and raiment to put on. How great was the moderation of Jacob. Nature wants but little. "Man wants little here below: nor wants that little long." If Jacob asked no more, then let us try to be contented with what we have. How many there are who when they go on a journey to seek their fortune, as it is called, desire to have many other things besides food and raiment. Those who have more than food and raiment, have it given to them that they may give to others. It is given them in order that they may give to those who need it. Those who keep it, and lay it up for themselves, do not enjoy it. With all their abundance they are often very unhappy. A little with the fear of the Lord is better than great riches and sorrow therewith. If God gives us more than food and raiment, let us be thankful, and use it for his glory. If he gives us only food and raiment,

ment, let us be satisfied and contented. Let us enjoy, to enjoy his presence and blessing, which are more to be desired than food and raiment, yea better than life itself. "Then shall the Lord be my God. I will renounce Idolatry. I will own no other God. I will worship no other, I will pray to him who seeth in secret." It also includes a solemn promise to maintain the worship of God, in his family. I will build an altar on this very spot and offer the tenth of all my property to the service of God. All that Jacob engaged to do, was lawful and practicable, the circumstances, the place of this solemn worship, and the tenth part of his substance which he resolved to give to God, were all right and proper, it was all cheerfully given without any command, without any restraint or limitation. Let us imitate the example of Jacob. "Honour the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."*

III.

* Prov. 3, 9, 10.

III. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What are the words of the Text? And Jacob vowed a vow.

2. What is a vow? A solemn promise made to God, to do some good thing at a future time.

3. What was Jacob's vow? "If God will be with me and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace: then shall the Lord be my God. And this stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

4. What do we learn concerning Jacob, in this Vow? That he was a man of FAITH, PIETY and MODERATION.

5. Did Jacob ever perform this Vow? Yes, on his return from Padanaram, we find, "That he built there an Altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him when he fled from the face of his brother. And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and

and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon" see Gen. 35. 7 and 14 verses.

6. What did Jacob do before he made this Vow? He took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

7. What was the name which Jacob gave to the place, and what was its former name? And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

8. What does Bethel mean? The House of God.

9 What does Luz mean? A nut or almond tree.

10. What may children learn from Jacob's Vow? To imitate him, in their humble dependence on God, in the pious choice of taking the Lord to be his God, and a moderate desire after the things of this world. Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

IV. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

When Jacob awoke from sleep he was in a holy and humble mind. Did you awake this morning

ing in the manner in which Jacob did? Did you rise early like Jacob to make a solemn Vow? That God should be your God, that you would attend constantly in his house to hear and to do his will, that you would devote to his cause as much as you could spare of your time, your talents and your money? Some children are very cross when they first get up. Instead of waking with a thankful heart and a grateful tongue: instead of thanking God that he has spared and protected them another night; they awake very cross and ill tempered. They will not dress, they will not bathe, they will not read, they will not pray, they will not go to school, and sometimes they will not eat their breakfast. What do you think such naughty children deserve? Children may make their chambers like a Bethel, like the house of God, by singing his praises, reading his word and praying to God, giving him thanks for the blessings they have received, and praying to him for what mercies they want. How delightful it is to hear children sing and pray as soon as they rise in the morning. "Surely," said Jacob, the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." How many children there

there are who do not know that the Lord is present with them in the morning when they rise from their beds. How many there are that say by their conduct, if God is here, I do not care for him, I will not pray to him. Jacob was afraid. If children were like Jacob, they would pray to him. If they were afraid of God, they would not sin against him. How dreadful must be that place where God is not. That is Hell. It must be Hell. It must be a misery too great to be endured, a weight of wrath too great to bear. The absence of God, How dreadful! Be content with such things as you have, if God saw that more was good for you, he would give it you. A contented mind is a continual feast. You should keep a book of Remembrance my dear children, and write down in it all the remarkable instances of God's goodness to you. Some children make promises which they are not able to perform, others make promises which they forget to perform, others only perform a part of what they promise. Never make a promise which you cannot keep. Many promise that they will be better children. When they are punished for a fault they promise that they will

will not do so any more, but how soon they forget the promise they have made. Why? Because they did not pray to God to help them to keep it. Some children there are who perform what they promise. These are good children, every one will trust them, will put confidence in them, because they do not break their promise, they keep their word. Remember the words of the wise man, "When thou vowest a vow unto God; defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools." That is in those persons who when in distress and affliction make any promises of amendment, but when the danger is past, they forget their promises and break their vows, and thus discover the highest folly in thinking to mock and deceive the Allseeing and Almighty God. "Pay that which thou hast vowed." Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thee to sin. Pray that Jacob's God may be with you to keep you in all your ways, that he may give you bread to eat and raiment to put on. That the Lord may be your God, that Christ may be your Saviour, the holy Spirit your Teacher and heaven, your happy and everlasting home. Amen.

A HYMN.

A HYMN.

Jacob's Vow. Gen. 28. 20, 22.

O GOD of Jacob by whose hand
We children still are fed,
Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led,

To thee our humble vows we raise,
To thee address our prayer,
And in thy kind and faithful breast
Deposit all our care.

If thou through ev'ry path of life
Wilt be our constant guide;
If thou wilt daily bread supply
And raiment wilt provide;

If thou wilt spread thy shield around
Till all our wanderings cease,
And at our Father's house above
Our souls arrive in peace;

To thee "Almighty God, to thee"
We will ourselves resign,
And count that not our tenth alone
But all we have is thine.

When from our earthly parent's house
Thou dost us far remove,
O bind our wand'ring hearts to thee
And fill them with thy love. *Doddridge.*

LECTURE

LECTURE XXIX.

RACHEL THE SHEPHERDESS.

GEN. 29. 9. *And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she kept them.*

JACOB'S journey now was pleasant, he went on his way with a cheerful countenance and a glad heart. He had no burden now upon his mind. His cares and fears are now over, and we are only told that he "came into the land of the people of the East." God guided him to the very field, where his uncle's flocks were to be watered. He beheld a well and three flocks of sheep lying by it. The Shepherds came up and rolled away the stone from the well's mouth, and having watered the sheep, they replaced the stone upon the well's mouth. Jacob inquired from whence they came. They answered, from Haran, "know ye Laban the son of Nahor, we know him. Is he well? He is well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. And Jacob said, Lo, it is yet high

high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep and go and feed them." This might seem rather strange that Jacob should direct these men to whom he was an entire stranger, what to do. It appears however that he wished them to depart, that they might not be present when Rachel came to hear the conversation that passed between them. They however informed him, that they must stop till all the flocks are watered. The flock which Rachel had under her care, was not yet arrived. This was probably a rule formed among themselves, to prevent the waste or unequal use of water, which was no doubt valuable and scarce, and also that the well might be left secure. In Arabia they cover the wells to prevent their being filled up by sands, which are put in motion by the wind. Sometimes wells or cisterns of water are locked up, so that no one can use the water without leave of the person to whom the well belongs. It is supposed that Rachel had the key of this well, or that they dare not roll away the stone till she came, because the well belonged to her father.

father.* In some places the rich Natives of India have tanks from which they permit persons to come and take water: this is esteemed a favour, because many poor people live at a great distance from the river.

While they were talking, Rachel came to the well with her father's sheep, for she kept them. Jacob went and rolled away the stone to water the flock of Laban his mother's brother, this being done he kissed Rachel and lifted up his voice and wept. He then told her who he was, and she ran and told her father; who, when he heard that Jacob was his sister's son, he ran to meet him and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. Let us then,

I. Relate a few particulars of Rachel's HISTORY.

When she first met with Jacob at the well, we find that she kept sheep, she was therefore well employed. Her industry was something like that of Rebekah; she not only kept the sheep, but drew water for them. It

* See Harmer's Observations, 1st vol. page 199.

is worthy of observation, that Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel are represented as engaged in their domestic employments, when they are brought forward to particular notice. Sarah at the visit of the Angels to Abraham made cakes with her own hands. When Eliezer, the servant of Abraham met with Rebekah, she was coming to fetch water for her brother's household, and Rachel the beautiful and beloved wife of Jacob, first appears as the keeper of her father's sheep. She was industrious, Jacob did not find her idle, but employed. This is the best way for young persons to keep themselves from mischief, from sin, from being tempted by Satan. Better keep sheep, than be idle. Rachel was humble also, her employment shews that she was not above what is accounted a mean and poor business. How many females there are that would rather do any thing than keep sheep. We find also, that she was affectionate. Jacob loved her and he met with a suitable return of affection. It is said that she was beautiful and well favored, that is, she had a fair countenance. How many there are to whom beauty is a snare. How many who are proud of their

beauty.

beauty. There are many also who wish to make themselves appear beautiful. They desire to look better than God has made them. Therefore they paint their faces and dress their hair, but they know not the fear and love of God. They are not beautiful in his sight, because they are destitute of the beauties of his holiness. Remember, my dear children, that "Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

And shall a Child be vain
Less than the lilly fair;
Can I so soft a tint obtain,
Or with the rose compare
The beauty of the mind;
Then let me learn to prize,
Nor boast of features far behind
The pride of flowers and flies.
If I am not as fair,
I am as frail as they;
To honor God be all my care
And that without delay. *Collyer.*

So great was Jacob's love for Rachel, that he served seven years in order to obtain her for his wife, and they seemed unto him but a few days,

days for the love he had for her. But she was jealous of her sister Leah and angry with Jacob without cause. Jacob gave her a suitable reproof and afterwards she had the blessing that she wished for. No doubt she prayed to God for it, because it is said, "God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened unto her. How kind it is of God to remember us when we so often forget him. How kind is God to hear us when we so often refuse to hear his voice. Rachel joined with her sister in complaining of their Father's treatment. She ought not to have done this, it would have been better to be silent if she could not vindicate him; she ought not have taken pleasure in exposing his fault. To be sure, Laban had not sought her happiness or comfort, but it was her duty to forgive him. We cannot by any means commend Rachel for stealing the images that were her father's. It is supposed that there were little idols kept in the house; they were Laban's household Gods. Rachel was the wife of a man that feared God, and yet she could not forsake her idols, could not leave them behind. What are we to think

of

of her conduct in not only taking them unknown to Jacob, but keeping them concealed, when her father was searching every place he could think of, in order to find them. Let us hope that she took them away that her father might not consult them in order to know which way they had gone.—Poor gods indeed, those are: which can be stolen away; yet such are the gods which thousands of women and children worship in India. Jacob when he heard that Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men, placed Rachel and Joseph last. Rachel had two children, Joseph and Benjamin. When Joseph was born she gave him a name, which intimated that she expected that God would give her another child. "And she called his name Joseph, and said the Lord shall add to me another son." As she said, so it was; Benjamin was born and Rachel died immediately after his birth. As she was dying she looked on the infant, and called his name Benoni, the son of my sorrow, but his father changed his name and called him Benjamin.—"Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem." That place

was

was after called so, because the Benjamites built a city there and called it Bethlehem. "And Jacob set a pillar upon Rachel's grave, and that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day." We are told this monument was a pyramid curiously carved and engraved, and that there were twelve very large stones at the foundation of this pillar, according to the number of Jacob's sons. This pillar remained for many years afterwards, even to the days of Samuel the Prophet. After Samuel had anointed Saul king of Israel, he told him that on his departure from him he should find two men by Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin, at Zelzah, and they shall say unto thee, "The asses that thou wentest to seek are found: and to thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying what shall I do for my son."

Let us reflect on the death of Rachel: she had said, give me children or else I die, meaning either that she should die of grief, or else lay violent hands upon herself. How painful was the consequence, she died immediately after Benjamin her second child was born.

When

When Laban accused Jacob of stealing his gods, he denied the charge, and so sure was he that no one had taken them, that he said, with whomsoever thou findest thy Gods let him not live, for Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them. This should teach us to beware how we speak when in anger, lest we should say that for which we may be very sorry afterwards.

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Patterson, Missionary at Karass, dated May 15th, 1805, was intended to be introduced into the Lecture on the death of Rachel.*

" God the Sovereign disposer of all events, has thought it meet that I should be bereaved of my greatest earthly comfort, one who appeared to me, who appeared to all who knew

* When I wrote the Lecture on Rachel's death, it was just after the death of my beloved partner, who died in a similar manner, and was intended to perpetuate her memory; but when I reviewed the Lectures for the Press, above four years after this event happened, I thought it best to leave out the Lecture altogether, as the subject was not suitable for children and young persons.

knew her, to be qualified in an eminent degree for a Missionary's wife. I mourn my loss. The Circassians and the Tartars sympathize with me. The ransomed boys mourn, and have been often heard to cry with tears running down their cheeks, 'OUR MOTHER IS NOT, OUR MOTHER DOES NOT COME, OUR MOTHER IS DEAD, WHAT SHALL WE NOW DO.' Poor boys, they might well mourn and lament, when they had lost so *dear and so valuable a friend.*"*

II. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What were the words of the Text? And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them.

2. Who were the persons that Jacob was speaking to when Rachel came? Shepherds, who had brought their flocks to the well to be watered.

3. Where did they come from? Haran.

4. What did Jacob say to them? He asked them from whence they came, and if they knew Laban the son of Nahor.

5.

* *See Missionary Magazine for* 1805, *page* 445.

5. What answer did they give him? They said, we know him.

6. Did Jacob inquire after Laban's welfare. Yes, he asked them if he was well, and they said, he is well.

7. When Jacob told them to water the flocks and go and feed them, what answer did they give to Jacob? And they said, we cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth: then we water the sheep.

8. When Jacob saw Rachel with the sheep, what did he do? He "went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother."

9. What did Jacob say to Rachel? And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother* and that he was Rebekah's son.

10. When Rachel heard this, what did she do? She ran and told her father.

11. When her father heard that Jacob his sister's son was come, what did he do? "He ran to meet him and embraced him, and kissed

* A name usually applied to any near relation in the East, though not born of the same mother, or in the same family.

ed him, and brought him to his house."

12. When Jacob had told Laban the reason of his coming to Haran, what did Laban say? Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. That is, he owned Jacob to be a very near relation.

III. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Rachel's name signifies a sheep. Whether her father when he gave her this name intended her for a Shepherdess, we know not. The employment in which she was engaged seemed to agree with her name. Surely the sheep must be well taken care of when she had the charge of them. No doubt there were proper persons under her who assisted her in this employment. She superintended or overlooked the whole herself, and it was her business to see that they did their duty, that the sheep were well fed and well watered, that they grew and increased. I think that all parents are employed like Rachel. They have a family which may be called their flock to take care. Ministers are called Shepherds; they watch over the souls of men, and they must give an account to him who is the great Shep-

herd and Bishop of our souls. Ministers' daughters may be like Rachel, and assist in taking care of their father's flock; at least they may feed the Lambs of his flock. They ought all of them to be Teachers in Sunday schools. I know a little Girl in India whose name is Rachel, who assists her Mother in taking care of a little flock. She had even a class of little girls under her own charge. Go, my little Rachels, and all of you imitate her. Instruct the ignorant. Teach poor children their letters. Teach them what you know of Jesus Christ. Pray for them and with them, pray for your younger brothers and sisters. If you have no other little flock to attend to, you can take care of them. Imitate the humility, industry and piety of Rachel. Always pray to God when you want any thing from God. Never say if I have not this thing I shall die. There are many who like Rachel wish for those things which may be very injurious to them. See that if you are not Shepherdesses, that you are the Lambs of Christ, the good Shepherd, who will carry you in his bosom, and when you die, take you to dwell in his fold above for ever and ever. Amen.

A HYMN.

A HYMN.

Christ the good Shepherd.

SEE the kind Shepherd Jesus stands,
With all engaging charms;
Hark how he calls the tender lambs,
And folds them in his arms.

Permit them to approach (he cries)
Nor scorn their humble name,
For it was to bless such souls as these
The Lord of Angels came.

He'll lead us to the heavenly streams
Where living waters flow,
And guide us to the fruitful fields
Where trees of knowledge grow.

The feeblest lamb amidst the flock
Shall be its Shepherd's care,
While folded in our Saviour's arms
We are safe from every snare.

Ye little flock with pleasure come,
Ye children seek his face,
And fly with eager joy to hear
His messages of grace.

Altered from Doddridge.

LECTURE XXX.

JACOB AND LABAN; OR THE UNCLE AND NEPHEW.

GEN. 30. 36. *And Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.*

YOU have already heard of Jacob's arrival at Haran, how he met with Rachel at the well and rolled away the stone and watered the flocks of Laban his Uncle. That Rachel ran and told her father that Jacob was come, and Laban ran and met him, and embraced him and brought him home to his house. After Jacob had been a month with his uncle, he proposed to give him wages and to employ him while he remained with him. "And Laban said unto Jacob, because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought, tell me what shall thy wages be?" During the month that he had been with his uncle, it appears that he was not idle, but continued to do all he could for his uncle. Laban was so much pleased with Jacob's care of his flocks, that he

was

was desirous that he should continue with him, I shall therefore proceed to inform you,

I. What JACOB did while he was in his UNCLE'S HOUSE.

1. We shall notice Jacob's *employment.*

He fed the flock of Laban. It is probable that after he took the charge of his uncle's flocks, Rachel did not continue to keep them. There was no necessity for her to continue this employment now. If she assisted Jacob, they had no doubt many opportunities for conversation. Jacob would no doubt relate the dreams that he had and the vow that he made at Bethel. That they were well taken care of we learn from what Jacob said to Laban, when he asked leave to depart after he had been with him 14 years. "Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me, for it was little that thou hadst before I came, and it is now encreased to a multitude, and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming." So that the flocks of Laban were increased and multiplied. Laban acknowledged that this was true and was very anxious that he should still remain with him. And

Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thine eyes, tarry, for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. This then was the employment of Jacob to feed the flocks of Laban his Uncle.

2. The WAGES JACOB received for this *employment*.

When Laban asked him, tell me what shall thy wages be, he replied, "I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter." Laban agreed to this proposal and said, "It is better that I give her to thee than that I should give her to another man, abide with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had for her. Then Laban cheated him and gave him Leah instead of Rachel, Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served him yet seven other years. After the birth of Joseph, Jacob said to his uncle, send me away that I may go unto my own place. Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served thee and let me go; for thou knowest my service which I have done

done unto thee. Laban confessed that he had derived much benefit from Jacob's service, and requested him to remain, saying, appoint me thy wages and I will give it. Jacob replied, "If thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock. I will pass through thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and all the spotted and speckled among the goats, and of such shall be my hire. And all the cattle that are not of this description shall be counted stolen with me: and Laban said, behold I would it might be according to thy word."—That is, let it be so, I will give these for thy hire. Laban thought no doubt that they would be but few, but he was greatly mistaken, for God blessed Jacob, and put into his mind a plan to encrease the number of such cattle as he had agreed to receive as his wages from Laban. "And the man encreased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid servants and men servants, and camels and asses."

3. Jacob's *sudden* and *secret* departure from his uncle's house.

After he had been about twenty years at the house of Laban, he heard Laban's sons saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory. As this was not true, Jacob does not seem to have paid any regard to it. But Jacob's uncle appeared to be displeased the countenance of Laban was not toward Jacob as before. His looks showed that he was not pleased with Jacob. He envied Jacob's flocks and herds, because the Lord had greatly blessed him. "And the Lord said unto Jacob, return unto the land of thy fathers, and I will be with thee. Then Jacob sent and called for Rachel and Leah into the field, and told them what their brothers had said, and that Laban had not only deceived him and changed his wages, but that he saw by his looks that he was angry in his heart, though he did not say any thing. And ye know, said Jacob, that with all my power I have served your father. Though he hath changed my wages so often: yet God hath suffered him not to hurt me, and that God had commanded him to return. They complained of the ill treatment which they had received from him

him, and said that whatever God had commanded Jacob to do, they would do the same. While Laban went to shear his sheep at a distance, he took his wives and children and all that he had, and stole away unawares from Laban the Syrian, for he told him not that he intended to depart, and it was not untill the third day, that he heard that Jacob was fled.

II. We shall now take notice of LABAN'S CONDUCT towards Jacob.

1. The CHEAT which LABAN put on JACOB in giving him Leah instead of Rachel.

He served seven years for Rachel and not for Leah, but when the time came, Laban gave him his eldest daughter instead of the younger one. Leah was tender eyed, but Rachel was beautiful and well favored, and Jacob loved Rachel. How unkind and deceitful was the conduct of Laban both to his daughter and to Jacob. When Jacob said to Laban, "What is this that thou hast done unto me, did I not serve with thee for Rachel? Wherefore then hast thou beguiled me? And Laban said, it must

not be so done in our Country to give the younger before the first born. This was a very poor excuse for the disappointment of Jacob, why did he not tell Jacob so when he proposed to serve him seven years for Rachel his younger daughter. There is no reason to believe that there was any custom like this, but that Laban wanted to dispose of his daughter to the best advantage: that is, to his own profit. Thus Jacob was punished for imposing on his father Isaac, in order to obtain the blessing. Jacob pretended that he was Esau, and Laban pretended to give him Rachel, but gave him Leah. Laban was unjust, deceitful and cruel, but the Lord was just and righteous in thus punishing Jacob for obtaining the blessing in a manner so improper, and at the same time to speak of the Lord God of Isaac in the manner which he did. Take heed, my dear children, beware of fraud and deceit; and be sure your sin will find you out.

2. The CHANGES he made in JACOB'S WAGES.

When Jacob by his countenance saw that Laban was displeased. He said to his wives that

that Laban had changed his wages ten times. It is supposed that after the first year when he saw that God favored Jacob with speckled, spotted and brown cattle, he changed the colour every six months for the remaining five years that Jacob was with him, but God suffered Jacob to be no loser, and Laban was no gainer by it. If Laban said, the speckled shall be thy wages, then all the Cattle bare speckled, and if he said the ring straked shall be thy hire, then all the cattle bare ring straked. Thus said Jacob to his wives, God hath taken away all the cattle that was your fathers and given them to me. It is God that has done all this. He saw what Laban did to Jacob, and God himself paid Jacob his wages, when he saw that Laban was not inclined to do it. God made Laban pay his debts; he was indebted to his daughters and to Jacob. He had kept back the portions of his daughter, and wanted to cheat his nephew out of his wages also.

3. We must notice LAB[illegible] TREATMENT of RACHEL and LEAH.

Hear how they complain, an[illegible]stly too. And Rachel and Leah answered u[illegible]ob and said,

said, "Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not counted of him strangers? For he hath sold us and quite devoured our money. For all the riches that God hath taken from our father, that is ours and our children's." Jacob said it was his wages. Rachel and Leah said that it was their portions which their father had kept back, but which God had taken this method of restoring to them. Are not these Laban's daughters, yes, and they were Jacob wives, so that Laban in injuring them injured Jacob. How could they love such a father who had sold them as slaves for the best price he could get for them. That is to say, fourteen years hard labour from his own nephew Jacob, his sister's son. Well might they be weary of their father's house and glad to go with Jacob to his country. They seemed to had their minds so much hurt by their father's unjust treatment that they are quite willing to go without taking their last farewell of Laban their father, and without even taking leave of their brothers. We hear of no affectionate parting when they left their father's

house,

house. No blessing. No tears. No, not even a farewell look. Their father and their mother knew not when they went away; they told not Laban that they fled, but they passed over the river and journeyed on to Gilead.

III. The friendly AGREEMENT* that was made between LABAN and JACOB.

On the third day it was told Laban that Jacob had fled: and he took his brethren; that is, his neighbours and friends, and pursued after Jacob, but such haste had Jacob made that it was seven days before he overtook him. No doubt he intended harm to Jacob, either to bring him back by force or take away part of his cattle. But the God of Jacob appeared to Laban in a dream the night before he came up with him, and said to him "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad." Laban accused Jacob of leaving him so suddenly that he did not allow him to send him away with music and songs, and that he had not even allowed him to kiss his daughters. He then told him that God had warned him not to do him any harm, and last of all accused him of stealing

* Covenant.

stealing his gods. It was bad enough to be called a runaway, but to be called a thief was much worse. Jacob denied the charge and told him to search all that he had. Laban did so, but did not find his gods. Rachel had taken them unknown to Jacob, and she hid them where her father could not find them.

When the search was ended and no images found, Jacob was angry and reproved Laban, and said, "What is my trespass and what is my sin that thou hast so hotly pursued after me. Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? Set it here before thy brethren and my brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both. These twenty years have I been with thee, thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee, I bear the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. Thus I was in the day, the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

Thus

Thus have I been twenty years in thy house. I have served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters and six years for thy cattle, and thou hast changed by wages ten times: Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight."

Laban was confounded by this affecting and forcible appeal: he makes no answer, and wished for a reconciliation to take place, and says that he could not do any harm to Jacob, because all that he had, formerly belonged to him, although God had given them to Jacob. "Now therefore come, thou, let us make a covenant (or agreement) I and thou, and let it be for a witness between me and thee. And Jacob took a stone and set it up for a pillar. And Jacob told his brethren to gather stones and make a heap. And Laban said to Jacob, this heap be witness and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me for harm. God of Abraham,

Abraham, the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac. Then Jacob offered sacrifice in the mount and called his brethren to eat bread, and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them, and Laban departed and returned unto his place."

IV, CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What were the words of the Text? "And Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks."

2. How many years did he serve for Rachel? Seven years.

3 How many years did he serve for Leah? Seven years.

4. How many years did he serve for the Cattle? Six years.

5. How many times during those six years did Laban change his wages? Ten times.

6. How long did Jacob feed the flocks of Laban? Twenty years.

7. What kind of Cattle did Jacob receive for his wages? The speckled and spotted

Cattle

Cattle, the brown among the sheep, and the speckled and spotted among the goats.

8. Why did Jacob choose these coloured Cattle? That they might the more easily be known, because they were so different in their colour from Laban's flocks.

9. Why did Jacob leave his uncle's house? Because he did not treat him with the same kindness he had done, his sons accused him of taking away all their father's cattle, and God commanded Jacob to return to the land of his father.

10. How did Jacob leave his uncle's house? Suddenly and secretly he stole away unawares, while Laban was gone to shear his sheep, and did not inform him that he was going to leave him.

11. When did Laban hear of Jacob's departure? On the third day.

12. What did Laban do when he heard that Jacob was gone? He pursued after him.

13. How long was it before he overtook Jacob? Not till after seven days.

14. The night before he overtook Jacob what happened to Laban? God appeared to him

him in a dream and said unto him, "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob, either good or bad."

15. What did Laban complain of when he overtook Jacob? That he had departed so secretly that he gave him no time even to kiss his daughters, but had taken them away like captives or prisoners of war.

16. What answer did Jacob make to this complaint. And Jacob answered and said to Laban, because I was afraid, for I said peradventure, thou wouldst take by force thy daughters from me.

17. Did not Laban accuse Jacob of stealing his gods? Yes, and Jacob denied it, and said, with whomsoever thou findest thy gods let him not live. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

18. When Laban had searched every where without finding the images, what did Jacob say to him? He was very angry with him, and told him to bring out every thing, and see whether he had taken any thing. He also reminded Laban how faithfully he had served him, and that he had treated him so ill;

ill: that if God had not taken care of him and restrained Laban's anger, he would have taken all that he had away from him.

19. What did Laban say to these words? He could make no answer, but desired that an agreement might be made: that in future they would do each other no harm.

20. Did Jacob agree to this? Yes, and the next morning Laban kissed his daughters and their children, and blessed them and returned unto his place.

V. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Let all uncles and nephews attend to the particulars that are here related of Jacob and Laban. Uncles ought not to treat their nephews hardly when they come to them in distress. If they have done that which is wrong, let them tell them of it kindly, and behave to them in the same manner, while they remain at their houses. How many poor nephews have reason to complain of the unkind treament they meet with, from hard hearted miserly old uncles. What do their riches profit them if they do no good with them. Jacob's employment was that of keeping sheep. Let every Shepherd act in the same upright manner. Jacob could

could say, "The rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee. I bare the loss of it. In the day I was scorched by the sun, parched with thirst, and weary and fatigued. Yet I watched also in the night, and many a time have I been pinched with cold. I slept not, but watched thy flocks, lest any harm should come to them." He was careful that none of Laban's flocks should suffer by his neglect. He was honest and did not take that which was not his own, no, not even for food. He watched in all weathers and patiently suffered both heat and cold. Laban was not only an unkind uncle, but a bad master. He changed Jacob's wages ten times in the course of five years. Every time he did this, he expected that Jacob would lose, and that he would gain by the change, but it was not so. He was unjust in requiring Jacob to make good that which was injured or lost, not by carelessness and neglect, but by accident. Such had been Laban's conduct to Jacob that he dare not tell him when he was going away, for fear he should take from him his wives and his cattle by force. How unkindly

did

did Laban behave to his daughters in selling them like slaves. There are many fathers like Laban; they do not care who they give their daughters to, if they are but RICH. But if there is no love, no affection, how can there be any happiness. Never endeavour to impose on any one, the cheat will be found out sooner or later. Therefore always act with candour and sincerity. Jacob was a man of peace, and though Laban was in the wrong and had greatly injured Jacob, yet he is very ready to overlook all and to promise in the most sacred and solemn manner, that he would not at any future period, do any harm either to Laban or his children. Let all Nephews act like Jacob. Let all Uncles avoid the conduct and disposition of Laban.

A HYMN.

Jacob and Laban.

IN Laban's character behold
A man who loves his flocks and gold,
He cheats his nephew, gives him Leah,
And chang'd his wages twice a year.

But Jacob's God doth Jacob pay,
And Laban dare not take away,
Those flocks which Jacob's God had given,
The blessing of the God of heav'n.
His daughters Laban basely sold,
And their own portion did withhold;
They cheerfully consent to leave
A Father who no blessing gave.

[Let all who lead a Shepherd's life
Far from the scenes of noise and strife,
Employ their time like Israel's king,
The praises of their God to sing.]

Like Jacob let them watchful prove,
Nor let their sheep or lambkins rove,
Like his may all their cattle thrive,
Like him do not them over drive.

O may it be your joy to share
Jesus, the tender shepherd's care,
And when your days on earth are told,
You shall be gather'd to his fold. R. M.

LECTURE.

LECTURE XXXI.

JACOB'S RETURN.

GEN. 32. 1. *And Jacob went on his way, and the Angels of God met him.*

AFTER Laban had departed to his place, we find that Jacob proceeded on his way towards the land of Canaan. Of Laban we hear no more, and it is much to be feared that his posterity were worshippers of Idols. They might retain a knowledge of the true God for a time, but by continually mixing with the Heathen around them, and practising the rites and ceremonies of the country. They lost it entirely they changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind; Who having changed the truth of God into a lie, worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator. Some say that Balaam the soothsayer was a descendant of Laban; if so, he followed the example of Laban, and though he did not entirely disown the true and

living

living God, yet he was devoted to the abominations of the Heathen. How many things happened to Jacob, while he was returning to his father's house. There are five remarkable things in this chapter. We shall briefly notice each of them.

I. JACOB'S VISION.

"And Jacob went on his way and the Angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, this is God's host: and he called the name of the place Mahanaim." Whether these Angels met him in a vision by day, or a dream by night, we are not told. They met him, he saw them. Angels met Jacob. When a conqueror or a king returns, the Officers of state meet him, the members of the corporation or the magistrates of the city. They go and meet him and present him with a sword and the freedom of the city. This was the case when the Duke of Wellington entered one of the cities in England. But Jacob is highly favored. Jacob is met not by nobles, but by Angels, not by the representatives of a city, a county or a king, but by the Messengers of the King of kings. They met

him

him to congratulate him on his escape from Laban, to welcome him to Canaan, and guide and protect him on his way. This is God's host. He called the name of the place, where he saw these Angels, Mahanaim, that is, two hosts or armies of Angels, or two Camps. Some say one army of guardian Angels had conducted him to the borders of Mesopotamia, and delivered Jacob over to the other army, who were the guardian Angels of Canaan. They appeared to Jacob, like two hosts on either side of him, one to protect him from Laban, who was behind him, and the other from Esau, who was before him, that they might be a complete guard to Jacob and his family.

II. JACOB'S MESSAGE.

" And Jacob sent a messenger before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, in the country of Edom. Thus shall ye speak unto my Lord Esau: Thy servant Jacob saith thus; I have sojourned with Laban and stayed there untill now: And I have oxen and asses, flocks, and men servants and women servants: and

I have sent to tell my Lord that I may find grace in thy sight."

See what a kind and humble message he sent to Esau. Though his way did not lay through the country of Edom, and he had no occasion to ask leave of his brother to pass through his land, yet as he was going so near where Esau dwelt, he would not pass by without telling him—He called him Lord, and told him that as he had plenty of flocks and herds and people of his own, he was not come to claim his right to the double portion. These two things had greatly offended Esau. Jacob gives them up that he may be reconciled to his brother, that he might find grace in his sight. It seems the messengers met Esau coming to meet Jacob, and having delivered their message, they returned and told Jacob saying: We came to thy brother Esau and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. This alarmed Jacob and made him greatly afraid, and he was so distressed and troubled in his mind, that he scarcely knew what to do. Esau remembered the offence of Jacob, and seemed to be resolved on revenging

ing himself, by destroying Jacob and all his family.

III. JACOB'S PRAYER.

Knowing that he was unable to resist his brother, he lays a plan whereby a part of his family and cattle at least might escape. "And he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks and the herds, into two bands; and said, If Esau come to the one company and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape." After having made use of the means of safety, he offers up a solemn prayer to God for his favor and protection. "And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which said it unto me, return unto thy country and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all thy truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands, deliver me I pray thee from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst,

I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." This prayer is offered up to Jacob's God, even the God of his father Abraham and Isaac, with great faith, fervor and humility. He trusts the promise of God, acknowledges himself unworthy of the least of God's mercies, and earnestly prays to be delivered from the hand of his brother: he pleaded the command of God for him to return, and his promise that he would "surely do him good."

IV. JACOB'S PRESENT.

After prayer he considers what else he can do to reconcile his brother and avoid his anger. He resolves to send him a present, not of gold and silver, not of jewels and fine linen, for he had none:—but of cattle. These were Jacob's riches, his flocks and his herds. And he lodged there that same night. It is supposed from this that all that is recorded after these words happened or was done in one night, "and he took of that which came to his hand, a present for Esau his brother, two hundred she-goats and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and

and twenty rams, thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten foals." In all, no less than 580 head of cattle; these he divided into droves, desiring each servant to say the same words, and to give the same answer to Esau. "When Esau my brother meeteth thee and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou, and whither goest thou, and whose are these before thee? Then shalt thou say, they be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my Lord Esau, and behold thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me." This present shows that Jacob was a rich, wise and peaceable man. A man's gift maketh room for him; it pacifies anger and strong wrath. He thought that this present would be acceptable to his brother, who might take a fancy to these ring straked, speckled and spotted cattle, that the very colors themselves would please Esau, and that he should thus obtain his favor.

V. JACOB'S NEW NAME.

After having sent the present off, Jacob,

it

it seems, laid himself down to sleep, that he might get a little rest, before he set out on his journey. The thoughts of his brother and his four hundred men kept him awake, and rising up he took his wives and children, and passed over the ford Jabbok, and when they were all safely over, Jacob being the last, he appears to have staid behind, that he might again make known his cares and his fears to God, and here it was that Jacob wrestled with an Angel, and prevailed. "And Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel,* for as a prince hast thou power with God, and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob

* That is, A PRINCE OF GOD.

cob asked him, and said, tell me I pray thee, thy name. And he said. Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

This is the account which the Scriptures give us of this wonderful event. This was not a vision but a real transaction. Jacob actually wrestled with an Angel in the form of a Man. Wrestling requires great strength, activity, attention, and exertion. It was an Angel, and not a man; because Jacob said, I have seen God face to face and my life was preserved. The same Angel, the same Lord that appeared to him at Beth-el and at Padan-aram. None but an Angel possessed of divine power could put Jacob's thigh out of joint, in such a manner as to wound and heal at the same time; for we do not read that Jacob felt any pain while he was wrestling with the Angel, he did not even halt till the struggle was over. He desired that Jacob would let him go. No, said Jacob, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. It is said that Jacob wept,

wept, and made supplication to the Angel, that for which he strove was a blessing, and this he obtained, for the Angel not only blessed him there, but changed his name or rather added another name to that which he already had. He was called Israel, a prince that had power with God and with man. Having obtained a blessing from God, this was a pledge that he should also obtain his brother's favor. This shows that the fervent and effectual prayer of a righteous man shall prevail and be successful at last, though delays, discouragement and opposition may prevail on every side for a time.

V. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What were the words of the Text? Jacob went on his way and the Angels of God met him.

2. When Jacob saw the Angel what did he say? This is God's host.

3. What was the message he sent to his brother? Thy servant Jacob saith thus: I have sojourned with Laban and stayed there untill now: and I have oxen and asses, flocks

flocks and men servants, and women servants: and have sent to tell my Lord that I may find grace in thy sight.

4. When the messengers returned to Jacob what did they tell him? That Esau was coming with four hundred men.

5. What did Jacob do when he heard this? He divided his company into two bands, and offered up a prayer to God. (Read his prayer.)

6. After he had prayed to God what did he do? Sent a present of 580 head of cattle and desired the servants of each drove to say he was coming behind.

7. After putting his wives and children over the river, what happened to Jacob when he was left alone? He wrestled with an Angel and prevailed.

8. What did he wrestle for? A blessing.

9. What did the Angel do to Jacob? He touched the hollow of his thigh and put it out of joint.

10. Did not the Angel give Jacob a new name? Yes, he called his name Israel, for as [illegible]ince hast thou power with God and with [illegible] hast prevailed.

VII. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Those that walk in the way that God commands them, shall be preserved from all danger in that way. Wherever Jacob pitched his tents, the Angels of the Lord encamped round about him. Because he feared the Lord, therefore he had no reason to be afraid of Man. Neither Laban nor Esau could hurt Jacob without God's permission. Jacob did not forget the respect that was due to Esau as his elder brother, his offended brother, but he desires that he would forget what is past and forgive his offence, receive him with the love and affection of a brother, who was sorry for his fault and had seen the evil of it. Angry people have generally very good memories; they remember all that has been done against them and take notice of every injury they have received. My dear children, try to forbear, forget and forgive. Always endeavour to make up a quarrel, the sooner it is ended the better, and if you can pacify your angry schoolfellows or brothers and sisters, by giving them a present, do it by all means. It is much better to live in

in harmony and peace, than to be continually striving with one another about every trifle and every word. Peace and love, though dearly bought, will be a good bargain to those who buy them. Always pray to God when you have made any one angry with you. Pray to God for forgiveness, and he can soften the hearts of those whom you have offended: incline them to forgive you also.

When you pray let it be with humility, acknowledge yourselves unworthy of the least of God's mercies. Try to help yourselves and use your endeavours, and in the use of the means, God will give you his blessing.

Seek ye the blessing of God, and do not rest satisfied without it. It was far better for Jacob that he obtained the Angel's blessing rather than his name. The tree of life is better than the tree of knowledge. Though Jacob obtained the blessing, yet he went halting to his grave. He was lame all the rest of his life. This was to keep him humble and mindful of God. It was before the sun rose that Jacob obtained the blessing. Early in the morning you must pray to God for his blessing.

With open eyes and joyful heart
I'll welcome in the day,
I'll throw my bed clothes all apart
And rise and kneel and pray.

Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed the night before, but now his fears are gone, his faith and confidence in God is returned, and instead of waiting for Esau, he pursues his journey knowing that he is safe in the hands of God. and that he is walking in the way which God directed him. Put your trust in the Lord, believe his promises. He can preserve you from all your enemies and from every danger. Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. O taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man that trusteth in him, there is no want to them that fear him, they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Amen.

A HYMN.

A HYMN.

Jacob's Return.

"JACOB," arise and leave this land,
No longer here remain;
For thou has tarried long enough,
Therefore go back again.

Behold the Angels of the Lord
Encompass him around,
While Jacob journey'd on his way,
These heav'nly hosts he found.

When Jacob heard that Esau came
With Men in arms arrayed,
In great distress we find him plung'd,
For he was much afraid.

To God he cried, his promise pleads,
And then a present sent,
Commands his Men kind words to use,
That Esau might relent.

That night he wrestled with a Man
Until the break of day
From him a blessing he obtain'd,
Before he went away.

"I will not let thee go," he said,
Till thou hast Jacob blest,
Thus he prevailed with God and Man,
His power the Man confess'd.

When dangers come, seek Jacob's God,
And offer fervent prayer,
You shall be safe, the Lord shall keep,
Thy soul from ev'ry snare. R.

LECTURE XXXII.

THE MEETING BETWEEN ESAU AND JACOB; OR THE RECONCILED BROTHERS.

GEN. 33. 4. *And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.*

IF any of you, my dear young friends, had a brother whom you had not seen for twenty years, would you not be very glad to hear that he was coming home? Yes. I am sure you would. Suppose this brother had threatened to take away your life, could you forgive him, could you meet him with the love and affection of a brother? Would you remind him of his former unkind and cruel threatening? Oh! no, that I think you would not. It would all be forgotten, you would be so glad to meet each other after so long an absence. Suppose you had done all that lay in your power to pacify this brother, and to produce a reconciliation, would you not have some reason to hope that he was no longer angry with you.

But

But if the news was brought that your brother was coming with a gun in his hand to shoot you, then I think you would be afraid. If you heard that he was coming with some villains to rob and murder you, then I think you would be afraid, and would think within yourself, how shall I defend myself? how shall I escape? what shall I do? I will tell you what you ought to do, after having tried by every means in your power to obtain your brother's forgiveness and to win his love. You ought to go and pray to God to protect you, and to change your brother's mind, that he may not do you any harm, and that when you meet, it may be in love, peace and joy.

Such was Jacob's state of mind, and such was the means he had used in order to pacify his brother and obtain his forgiveness. He had also earnestly implored the protection and blessing of God. He was not alone, he had two wives, twelve children, many servants, and much cattle to care for. All these were at the mercy of his brother, and he could not only deprive Jacob of all this property, but

also take away the life of Jacob, and the lives of those who were dear to him. He was coming, and four hundred met with him, a large army in those times for one man to command. Abraham could only muster 318, but Esau has an army of 400 men. Well might Jacob be afraid, and think that his brother was not coming with any peaceable intention. Esau is very near. Let us therefore,

I. Notice ESAU'S APPROACH.

"And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men." Some think that by Jacob's lifting up his eyes, is meant that he appeared cheerful in his countenance in opposition to a dejected and sorrowful face. He relied upon the promise and protection of God, and therefore went forward to meet his brother, with all the confidence of a friend. All who cast the burden of their care and trouble, whatever that may be, upon God, shall find that he is able to support them. He will give them that peace and satisfaction in

their

their minds, which none but an Almighty God can give.

" And he divided the children unto Leah and unto Rachel, and unto the two hand maids. And he put the handmaids, and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost."

We here find that Jacob puts his family into the best order that he possibly could have done in so short a time. Thus he prepared both himself and his family, to receive his brother. He placed the children with their own mothers, well knowing that each mother would be most concerned for the safety of her own children, and the best person to protect them from danger or plead in their behalf, if there should be any necessity to plead with Esau that their lives might be spared. He placed those last for whom he had the greatest affection, Rachel and Joseph. This shows that though he treated his brother as if he was in hopes of meeting a friend, yet he was secretly afraid of him. He goes on before them all to meet his brother. " And he passed over before them, and bowed him-

self to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother."

He had by his messengers acknowledged his brother as his Lord, and therefore in token of his submission and sincerity, he bows down to the ground seven times before he reached his brother. None but those who have seen the Natives of the East bow themselves in this manner when they approach a great man, especially if they want his favor or forgiveness, can have a correct idea of what Jacob did. We cannot fully understand this in England. It is much more than what is intended by a common bow, which is only a token of respect to our superiors or friendship to our equals.

See how humble, submissive and respectful the conduct of Jacob is. Though he feared Esau as an enemy, yet he paid him the respect of a brother and an elder brother. The object of Jacob appears to be that of satisfying his brother's mind that he claimed no superiority, but freely gave it up to Esau as the elder brother. How very different did Jacob appear

at

at the head of a numerous family, when compared to Esau at the head of 400 men. Who is there that would not sooner be Jacob than Esau. There may be one present perhaps, who thinks to be a soldier to become an officer and command a Regiment. If so, I only wish you may be like Colonel Gardiner and then you will pray like Jacob and look like Esau.

II. The AFFECTIONATE MEETING that took place between ESAU and JACOB.

"And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him: and they wept." Esau ran to meet him not in anger, with his heart full of revenge: but in love as one whose heart God had touched, as one who was touched to the heart with his brother's uniform kindness and submissive conduct. He ran to meet his brother as one that was now quite reconciled to him. What a happy meeting was this for Jacob. Here he receives an answer to his prayers, and such an answer as only God could give, for in his hand are the hearts of all men. See here the fulfilment of that gracious promise. "Be-

hold I am with thee and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."*

Esau embraced him and fell on his neck. This refers to the Eastern custom of kissing the shoulder in an embrace. Have not you, my dear children, often seen the Musselmauns salute each other, by kissing the shoulder and touching first one breast and then the other. I have seen it, and thought it a very singular way of saluting each other, but we see here another instance of the striking illustration or explanation of the Scriptures by the manners and customs of the East. Esau received his brother with all that endearment and affection which we could expect from one who had not seen his brother for so long a time. Though Esau did not bow in return to his brother, yet he ran to meet him, and embraced him. It appears that a sincere reconciliation

* See Gen. 28. 15.

ciliation took place at this time between Esau and Jacob.

"And they wept." They both wept. Jacob wept for joy to think how kindly his brother had received him, and how graciously God had heard and answered his prayers. Esau probably wept for shame and grief, when he thought of the evil design which he had in his heart against his brother Jacob. He could not but weep when he found how strangely and unaccountably God had prevented him from the execution of the design which he had formed against his brother's life. We cannot but rejoice to see the heart of Esau thus melted. Let us not forget that it was all God's doing, who turneth the hearts of men as rivers of water. Think on the means which Jacob had made use of to turn his brother's heart. A present of 580 head of cattle, an humble and submissive message, by each servant who had the charge of these cattle: bowing himself to the ground seven times: and earnest and fervent prayer to God. "A brother offended (says Solomon) is harder to be won than a strong city." These are the means which

Jacob used to win his brother's heart, to obtain his forgiveness and affection. If you pray as Jacob did and be as kind, humble and submissive as he was, you will find it much more easy and comfortable as you pass through the world, than you would if you stood out for every trifle and contended for honor and right on every occasion.

III. Attend to the CONVERSATION that passed between ESAU and JACOB,

"And he lifted up his eyes and saw the women and the children; and said, who are those with thee? And he said, the children which God hath graciously given thy servant. Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves, and Leah also with her children came near and bowed themselves; and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themthemselves." Here we see eleven or twelve little children, the eldest of them not yet fourteen years old, following their father's example, and bowing themselves before the face of their uncle Esau. What an interesting sight this must have been. It was enough to

melt

melt a harder heart than that of Esau's to see his brother's children and his brother's wives acknowledge him their lord. Jacob had not mentioned his *wives* and children in the message which he sent to his brother. He might well be surprized and ask him, "who are those with thee? To this common question Jacob returns an uncommon answer. "They are the children which God hath graciously given thy servant." The common answer which we would naturally expect to hear would be, They are my wives and my children. Jacob spoke like a man who feared God, like one who acknowledged him in all his ways even in the common concerns of life. We do not hear one word from Esau when he saw Jacob's family. No expression of pleasure. No blessing, not even a good wish when he saw them bowing before him one after the other. Had they been Esau's children bowing before Jacob, we should have heard him say, God bless you, my children, or God be gracious to you my children. Not a single word is recorded as spoken by Esau on this interesting and affecting interview.

Esau

Esau then asked his brother concerning the present which he had sent him. "What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, these are to find grace in the sight of my Lord. And Esau said I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself. And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore have I seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me." Some think that Jacob made use of a proverbial expression, when he said these words to his brother. It was very strong language and expressive of strong feelings. Such were the feelings of Jacob's mind at the time. As if he had said, "I have seen thee reconciled to me and at peace with me, in the same manner as I desire to enjoy peace and reconciliation from God. He might mean that he had seen God's favour to him in the manner in which Esau had received him.

"Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And

And he urged him, and he took it." Esau then proposed to return with his brother and his family, and be their guard by the way. He seems also to have invited his brother to his habitation at Mount Seir; but Jacob on account of the children and cattle that were with him, declined this invitation. Let us hear him speak for himself.

"And he said, Let us take our journey and let us go, and I will go before thee. And he said unto him, my Lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if the men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die." Here we see what a gentle shepherd and what a tender and kind father Jacob was. How much more kind is God our heavenly Father to little children. What a kind and gentle shepherd is the Lord Jesus Christ; he will gather the Lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.* "Let, my Lord, I pray thee, pass on before his servant; and I will lead on softly

* Isaiah 40. 11.

softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me, and the children be able to endure, untill I come unto my Lord unto Seir. And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, what needeth it? Let me find grace in the sight of my Lord. So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir.

"And Jacob journeyed to Succoth and built him an house and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth."*

IV. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What did Jacob see when he lifted up his eyes? He saw Esau coming and with him four hundred men.

2. When he saw that Esau was so near what preparations did he make?

"He divided the children unto Leah and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

3. In what order did he place them?

"And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after

* Succoth means tabernacles, tents or booths.

after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

4. Where did Jacob place himself, and what did he do till he came near his brother? He passed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times.

5. What are the words of the Text?

"And Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept."

6. When Esau saw the women and the children, what enquiry did he make concerning them?

And he said, who are those with thee?

7. What answer did Jacob give him?—He said, the children which God has graciously given thy servant.

8. How did Jacob's family behave to Esau? The handmaidens came near and bowed themselves; and Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

9. What did Esau say concerning the present which Jacob sent him? What meanest thou by all this drove which I met!

10.

10. What did Jacob give him? These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.

11. When Esau said that he had enough and desired his brother to keep the present for himself, what did Jacob say? Nay, I pray thee now, if I have found grace in thy sight, receive my present at my hand; for therefore have I seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

12. Did Esau accept the present from his brother? Yes, he urged him and he took it.

What did Esau say he would do for him on his way back? That he would go before him to be his guard.

14. Did Jacob accept of his brother's offer? No, he declined on account of the children and the cattle.

15. When did Esau return home? So Esau returned that day unto Seir.

16. To what place did Jacob journey and where did he remain?

"And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house and made booths for his cattle."

V. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Here we see the storm which Jacob so much dreaded

dreaded, passed away. A bright sun, a clear sky and fair weather. Designs of revenge and murder, are changed to tenderness and love.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds you so much dread,
Are big with mercy and will break
In blessings on your head. *Cowper.*

God will not only restrain the wrath of man, but he will make it to praise him. He can bind the hands of our enemies. He can awe their spirits as he did that of Laban's. He can change their hearts as he did that of Esau and excite in them natural affection. How true are those words, "That when a Man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his Enemies to be at peace with him." We cannot help admiring the good behaviour of all Jacob's children. We see no disobedience to their father's commands. They cheerfully follow his example. We do not hear any of them, saying:—"I do not love Uncle and I will not bow to him because he was going to kill Father." No such words as these was heard. Not even an unkind look that we read of. We must not be angry and behave disrespectfully to our relation,

tion, because they do not behave as they ought to us. We must not only forget, but likewise forgive, and pray that God would bless them. If one obstinate child had refused to bow to Esau, what mischief he might have done. When parents set before their children a good example there is reason to hope they will follow it. It is the duty of parents to promote a reconciliation among their children when they fall out with each other. Jacob humbled himself before his brother and called him his lord. Many preserve themselves by a humble and submissive conduct. The ball flies over him that stoops. Many are forced to stoop as they pass through the world, and those that do not and will not, often get a hard knock on the head. Call upon God in the day of trouble and he will hear you. Jacob did not pray in vain. Children are the gift of God. Let us remember that he who gives them can take them back again when he pleaseth, this will moderate our affection to them. Let parents imitate Jacob's kind and tender care of his children, and not drive them, but lead and guide them. Let all shepherds and drovers

imitate

imitate Jacob's care of his flocks and herds. How often do they overdrive those intrusted to their care. They occasion much pain to the poor creatures and loss to their employers. Drovers are often very cruel to the cattle they drive. Let all children imitate Jacob's children, in their obedience to their parents and respect to their relations.

A HYMN.

Love between Brothers and Sisters.

WHATEVER brawls disturb the street,
There should be peace at home,
Where Sisters dwell and Brothers meet,
Quarrels should never come.

Birds in their little nests agree;
And 'tis a shameful sight,
When children of one family
Fall out and chide and fight.

Hard names at first, and threat'ning words,
That are but noisy breath,
May grow to clubs and naked swords,
To murder and to death.

The devil tempts one Mother's Son
To rage against another;
So wicked Cain was hurried on
Till he had kill'd his brother.

The wise will let their anger cool,
At least before 'tis night;
But in the bosom of a fool,
It burns till morning light.

Pardon, O Lord, our childish rage,
Our little brawls remove;
That as we grow to riper age,
Our hearts may all be love.

Watts.

LECTURE

LECTURE XXXIII.

REBEKAH'S NURSE.

GEN. 35. 8. *But Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak.*

IT is very remarkable that only three nurses are mentioned in the Bible. The *first* is Rebekah's nurse. The *second* is the nurse of Mephibosheth. "He was but five years old when his father and grandfather were killed." His nurse heard of the Victory which the Philistines had gained over the Israelites. Saul and Jonathan were slain in battle. Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan. As soon as the nurse heard the news, she was afraid they would send a party of men to the house of Jonathan to kill his son, because he was next heir to the crown. She took up the child in her arms and was hastening with him to some place of safety, but making more haste than good speed, she fell, by which means either the child's ancle bones were broken or put out of

of joint, so that he was lame for the rest of his life.

The *third* was the nurse of Joash, who was taken by his aunt when he was only a year old and concealed with his nurse in one of the chambers of the temple for six years, so that by this we may suppose there were but few nurses among the Jews.

Let us then proceed to speak of Rebekah's Nurse. I shall notice Her NAME, CHARACTER, OFFICE, DEATH and BURIAL.

I. Her NAME and CHARACTER,

Her name Deborah means a Bee. A little insect that is very industrious. Nurses must be industrious, for they have generally plenty of work to do. At least I know that nurses in England have not much time to spare. The character of Deborah seemed to have been such as to have gained not merely the respect, but the love of all Jacob's family. When Rebekah was grown up to years of maturity, she was still kept in the family of Bethuel. She went with Rebekah to Abraham's dwelling place and appears to have remained with Rebekah till her death.

death. Jacob seems to have paid a visit to his father, and finding that his mother Rebekah was dead and her nurse advanced in years, he took her into his own family. She must have been dear to Rachel and Leah on many accounts, having lived in their father's family, she was no doubt much respected and beloved by them. They were able to repay her services by their kindness and attention to her in her old age. There is nothing recorded concerning her from the time she left Padan-aram with Rebekah till she died. She seems to have been a worthy character, or else there would not have been so much weeping at her death as to give a name to the place where she was buried.

II. Her OFFICE.

This seems to have been that of attending on Rebekah in the capacity of a friend and companion. It is said "That when circumstances compel the Egyptian women to take a nurse, she is not looked upon as a stranger. She becomes part of the family, and passes the rest of her life in the midst of the children she has suckled. She

She is honoured and cherished like a second mother."*

A nurse in an Eastern family is a person of the greatest importance. It is scarcely possible where there are children to do without one. Sometimes three or four are kept in the same family. They are of two kinds or classes. Wet nurses who are called Dai's, and Nurses for children that are past infancy who are weaned from the breast, these are called Ayahs. Their wages are from 6 to 8 or 10 rupees per month. A Dai receives her food and clothes and jewels to the amount of 50 or 100 rupees. Modern travellers inform us that in Syria they are considered as a kind of second parent. That the nurse accompanies the Bride to the house of her husband, and remains there ever afterwards as a useful and honoured person. They are held in the highest estimation and considered as entitled to a constant and lasting regard. There are various kinds of nurses in England. Some attend on persons who are sick.

* Harmer's Observations, 4th vol. p. 287.

sick. Others have the care of young children, infants who stand in need of milk and are not able to bear strong meat. There are others who are called Nurse maids, who have the charge of the nursery, which sometimes contain two or three or four children. To each of these I shall say a few words at the end of this Lecture.

III. Her DEATH.

She died in a good old age, she must have been far advanced in years, since it is supposed that her death happened about 125 years after the marriage of Rebekah. She died in a family, who had reaped but little, perhaps no advantage whatever from her services, Deborah must have been so old when she entered Jacob's family, as not to be capable of any active service. We should rather suppose that she occasioned Rachel and Leah and those about her some trouble, but she who had spent her best days in the service of their aunt Rebekah, deserved to be treated with every possible kindness and attention by her two nieces. If they had any regard for the memory of their aunt, they

they would be kind to Deborah for her sake. There is doubt but Jacob had the greatest regard for his mother. He was her darling son. She loved him much and he would be kind to Deborah, on her account. So that no doubt she was beloved by all both parents and children. The children in India are often so attached to their nurses as to give them part of their fruits or sweetmeats that are given them, they sometimes ask their parents to give their nurse a present.

IV. Her BURIAL PLACE.

While they were at Bethel, Deborah died, and died lamented by all the family, so much so that the oak under which she was buried was called the oak of weeping. Jacob's family honoured Deborah at her death, though she was old and useless, though she was a stranger and not related to the family. How many Nurses there are not so much respected as Deborah while they live, and when they die there is no lamentation made by those whom they have nursed, or the family in which they have lived. The sorrow expressed at her funeral was not on account of her character merely,

merely, but her office, she was Rebekah's Nurse. She had behaved well during the life of Rebekah, and continued in the family after her death, therefore while Jacob wept over the grave of Deborah, he no doubt let fall not a few tears in remembrance of his beloved mother. Whether he knew of her death before he visited his Father, we are not told, but perhaps he did. If so, when her nurse died, his sorrows were renewed. This was only a prelude to a more sorrowful event:—the death of his beloved Rachel which happened soon afterwards. Had Deborah been alive she would have been a great comfort to Rachel at that painful and sorrowful period.

V. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What are the words of the Text? "But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak."

2. What was that oak called? Allon-bachuth, or the oak of weeping.

3. What does Deborah's name mean? A word, or a Bee.

4. How old was Deborah when she died? Her age is not known, but it is said she died

125 years after the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah.

5. At what place did Deborah die? Near Bethel.

6. Where was she buried? Under an oak.

7. Who were they that wept over the grave? The family of Jacob.

8. Had she always lived in that family? No, she appears to have been taken in Jacob's family on his arrival in Canaan after his mother's death.

9. Have we any particular account of Deborah? She is only mentioned once before and that was when she left the house of Bethuel to accompany Rebekah.*

10. What is the next thing that ought to be attended to? To pay particular attention to the Practical Address.

VI. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

1. A few words to those NURSES who attend on SICK PERSONS. Be kind, be patient, sympathyze with the person who is sick, give them their medicines regularly at the time appointed

* Gen. 24. 59.

pointed by the doctor. Strictly attend to his orders. When persons take medicine with reluctance, bear with them. Tell them how necessary they are to their recovery. Try to keep them easy both in body and mind, place them in such a posture as you think will give them least pain. If you have to watch them by night then you ought to sleep in the day. If they are dangerously ill, then two persons ought to set with them. They must not be left alone in order to guard against drowsiness. One should lay down while the other watches for a certain period, and the person taking rest should only be called on absolute necessity. Keep the room and the house as quiet as possible. Speak with kindness to those whom you may be called to attend. Their pain may make them cross, impatient and restless, but then there is a greater need for your forbearance and sympathy. Only think how you would like to be treated if you were in their place, and treat them in the same manner.

2. A few words to those NURSES who have the care of INFANTS, that are not yet weaned from the breast,

If

If they have children of their own it will require some sacrifice to do justice to the children of a stranger, but this may be done and has been done, I believe, without any injury to their own children. It is the duty of mothers to choose such as are healthy and able to afford plenty of nourishment to their infants. She ought to be a careful, clean, good natured woman. She ought to love the child that is under her care, because the helpless state of an Infant has a peculiar claim to the compassion and tenderness of a Nurse. Children must not be suffered to lay and cry for a long time. Crying strains their nerves and often causes inflammations. A child never continues to cry long without some cause, which may easily be discovered by a careful Nurse. That Nurse who can hear a child lay and cry till it is nearly spent itself, without endeavoring to please and quiet it, must be cruel indeed. She is unworthy to be trusted with a human creature. Beware of endeavouring to supply the want of milk by wines and spirituous liquors. Goat's milk is much to be preferred to any thing of this kind. Never give a child

any

any thing to lull it to sleep, give the child exercise in the open air, and that will make the child sleep without any thing else, if it is well and in health. Spirits, strong liquors and things given to make children sleep, are certain poison, and yet they are often given by those who have the character of being very good Nurses. Always keep an Infant clean and dry, and never drive in any eruptions of the skin which you may happen to discover. Do not be alarmed, do not endeavor to stop any eruption without first asking advice. Never frighten the child in order to make it cease from crying. Never conceal any disease which a child may have, or any accident which may happen to children on account of your own carelessness or inattention. Better mention it at once to the parents of the child, than to suffer the child to be lame or injured for life, because you dare not mention because you will be blamed.*

3. A few words to those NURSES who have the care of CHILDREN after they are *weaned*. They are called NURSE MAIDS in England because

* See Buchan's Domestic Medicine, pages 19—30.

cause they have the charge of the children in the NURSERY, which is a room that is set apart for the use of the children in every large family, where servants are employed. A nurse maid's place is I belive considered an easy one, but it is a very important one. There is reason to fear that many young girls when they obtain such a place, think but little of the importance of the charge they undertake. How much good a well disposed well educated Nursery maid may do. How much good a pious Nursery maid may do to the children under her care. She ought to be one that loves children, good tempered and having a large stock of patienee on hand, or she will assuredly become a bankrupt before twelve months have passed away. Children soon become attached to the person who has the care of them, who is willing to please them as far as they can, and who always attend to their real wants. Never leave them alone, especially when you are walking out with them. You know not what may befall them in your absence. Do not buy any fruits or sweetmeats for them which you know that their parents disapprove of. Never take them to the houses of any of your acquaintance,

tance, lest they should see or hear any thing that is improper. Children are generally fond of pictures; if therefore you buy any thing to please them, let it be such pictures as you can explain to them, such as will yield some important lesson of instruction. Birds or Beasts, these you can describe to them. Scripture pictures will afford you an excellent opportunity of explaining to them a few of the plainest and most interesting parts of the Bible. As they grow older, pictures with a short description underneath, will be very suitable. In teaching them their letters, should that be a part of your office, tell them that these letters are the beginning of the names of things which they have seen and are well acquainted with. Either the names of their parents, themselves, their brothers and sisters, or friends. That these letters stand for certain Birds or Aminals with which they are acquainted, or of certain things which they love. Thus you will make a pleasure for them to learn, and an easy and delightful work for you to teach. See that you are industrious and as

busy

busy as Bees. Deborah means a Bee. If any young person of the name of Deborah should read this Lecture, let them try to imitate Rebekah's Nurse, and then they will live respected and beloved, and die lamented by those who have been the objects of their care.

Let parents take heed of trusting too much to the Native Nurses of India. They have an awkward way of carrying Children in this country, their Bangles and Jewels are apt to hurt the children when they carry them in their arms. They are apt to neglect children and treat them ill, when the parents of the children are not present.* They sometimes sit down on the damp grass and ground with the children when they go out for a walk with them of an evening. I have often seen them myself. Children learn many bad words and bad practices from their Ayahs. Let your children be as little with them as possible.—Keep a watchful eye on them.

A HYMN.

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* There is a little book called the Lady and her Ayah, which I would recommend to all Mothers in India to peruse. See the story on the 7th Command.

A HYMN.

For Nurses to sing when the Child is going to sleep.

HUSH my dear, lie still, and slumber,
Holy Angels guard thy bed,
Heavenly blessings without number,
Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe; thy food and raiment,
House and home, thy friends provide;
All without thy care or payment,
All thy wants are well supplied.

How much better thou'rt attended,
Than the Son of God could be,
When from heaven he descended,
And became a child like thee.

Lo, he slumbers in a manger,
Where the horned oxen fed;
Peace, my darling, here's no danger,
Here's no ox a near thy bed.

'Twas to save thee child from dying,
Save my dear from burning flame,
Bitter groans and endless crying,
That thy dear Redeemer came.

May'st thou live to know and fear him,
Trust and love him all thy days;
Then go dwell for ever near him,
See his face and sing his praise,

I could give thee thousand kisses,
Hoping what I most desire,
Not a Mother's fondest wishes,
Can to greater joys aspire. *Watts.*

LECTURE XXXIV.

JACOB'S CHILDREN.

GEN. 35. 22. *Now the Sons of Jacob were twelve.*

FIRST PART.

THERE are many parents to whom God has given as many children, as he did to the patriarch Jacob. Children are an heritage of the Lord. Parents who have a numerous family, have also much care and anxiety about them. A person once observed to a Minister of the Gospel, that he had as many Children as Jacob. Yes, said the good man, and I have Jacob's God to provide for them. In the verses following the text, we have a complete list of Jacob's sons. This is the first time that we find their names mentioned altogether; afterwards we find them often mentioned together as the heads of the tribes of Israel. I shall notice a few things concerning the character and history of each of Jacob's sons. The prophecies of Jacob just before his death concerning his sons, as heads of the tribes of Israel, will give us some insight into their personal

personal character and history. I shall notice them in the order in which they are mentioned in the 49th Chapter, because in this Chapter they are not mentioned according to the order in which they were born.

Jacob had one daughter, and her name was Dinah, she was the daughter of Leah. Her name Dinah means judgment, or one who judges. When she was about 15 or 16 years of age, she was the cause of great pain and sorrow to her parents. She occasioned the murder of the Shechemites and the plunder of the city. She went out to see, and be seen, and sad indeed were the consequences of her going out to see the daughters of the land. She being the only daughter was no doubt a favorite with all the family, the darling of her mother. Her vanity was her ruin, and this has been the ruin of many others besides Dinah, the daughter of Jacob. There is nothing good recorded of Dinah. She occupies one whole chapter with the mischief cruelty, deceit and murder, of which she was the sole cause. As we cannot say any thing in her commendation, we shall say no more about her now.

1. REUBEN.

His name signifies the *vision of a son*. He was Jacob's eldest son by Leah. His Father remembers his son on a dying bed, and said unto him, "Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Reuben was an unsteady character; there was no dependence to be placed in him. His disposition was very changeable. He wanted decision of character, and firmness of mind. He wanted perseverance. He was inconstant and had not fixed principles. Therefore he did not excel either as a man or as a tribe. When he interceded for Joseph, his brethren would not hear him, he had lost all influence with them. His Father also did not pay any attention to his unwise and imprudent speech, when he said, Slay my two sons if I bring him not unto thee; deliver him into my hand and I will bring him to thee again. There was no Judge, no Prophet, no Prince in Israel belonging to the tribe of Reuben. Dathan and Abiram who rebelled against Moses and offered strange fire

before

before the Lord, belonged to the tribe of Reuben. The Priesthood was given to Levi, the dominion to Judah, and the double portion to Joseph.

II. and III. SIMEON and LEVI.

These two sons are joined together by Jacob, and we shall not separate them, but speak of them jointly. Simeon's name means *one that hears* or is *heard* and one that *obeys*. Levi signifies one who is *joined* or *united with another*. An associate means one who has united with another in doing evil. Levi lived to the age of 137 years and then died. Simeon and Levi are brethren. What an endearing term when made use of in speaking of two persons united in the ties of affection or bonds of friendship. It is made use of by Jacob to represent two brothers united in revenge, cruelty, bloodshed and murder. Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. Their swords which ought to have been used only as weapons of defence, became instruments of violence. They seem to have been of obstinate dispositions that would not be advised, but would follow their own evil inclinations. Their tempers were

passionate and revengeful. In their anger they would have put Joseph their brother to death. By killing all the men of Shechem they took the most effectual means of digging down the wall of the city, by taking away from the women and children their only defence. Well might Jacob say, "O my soul come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly, mine honor be not thou united." We have reason to think that Simeon and Levi were most active in the wrong done against Joseph, and were the most forward of all his brethren in promoting his destruction, therefore Joseph took Simeon as the hostage or surety for the return of the rest of his brethren with Benjamin, yea, he bound him before their eyes. Their conduct had been the occasion of much pain and shame to Jacob. Therefore they brought down upon their heads a curse instead of a blessing. "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel." Simeon's lot was divided, and so narrow that they were obliged to separate and seek for a habitation and

dwelling

dwelling place where they could find it. They were even obliged to accept of a part of the inheritance of Judah. Levi had no inheritance among his brethren: the priesthood was given him and he lived on offerings.

IV. JUDAH.

JUDAH was the fourth son of Leah. His name signifies *Praise*, because Leah said when she had received from God a fourth child, "Now will I praise the LORD." Therefore it was that Jacob said, "Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise." He was guilty of many sins. He kept bad company. He had two of his sons slain by the Lord, they both died a sudden and awful death on account of their sins. Judah was the means of saving the life of his brother Joseph, and proposed that he should be sold to the Ishmaelites and not be left to die in the pit into which they had put him. He became surety for Benjamin, and pleaded in a very feeling and affectionate manner both for Jacob his aged Father, and Benjamin his younger brother. The dominion was given to Judah and therefore his tribe went first in their march through the wilder-

ness to the land of Canaan. The tribe of Judah was victorious, bold and courageous. It was a Royal Tribe. From Judah descended David, king of Israel, and Jesus Christ, the King of Kings.

V. ZEBULUN.

He was the fifth son of Leah, his name signifies *dwelling* or *habitation*. Of him little is said in the sacred scriptures. From the blessing pronounced upon this tribe, we should suppose that he was inclined to dwell near the rivers. Perhaps he might, when a boy, delight in making little ships and find his pastime in seeing them sail on the water. This we know that the tribe of Zebulun had their dwelling on the sea coast. His inheritance extended from the sea of Galilee, sometimes called the Lake of Tiberias, by which it was bounded on the east and on the west by the Mediterranean sea. His posterity became Merchants, Mariners and Traders at sea. They went down to the sea in ships and did business in the mighty waters. They saw the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. Jacob said, "Zebulon shall dwell at the haven of the sea: and he

he shall be for an haven of ships, and his border shall be unto Zidon."

VI. ISSACHAR.

He was the sixth and last son of Leah. His name means *Hire, price, reward,* or *recompence.* If he accompanied his brethren to the slaughter of the Shechemites, his strong and powerful arm must have done much execution; many must have fallen by his hand. We should suppose from the character of his children that he was an husbandman, one that cultivated the ground. Perhaps he was a farmer, a quiet, peaceable man. "Issachar is a strong ass (said Jacob), couching down between two burdens, and he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant: and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute." The tribe of Issachar was industrious and laborious, and their land was pleasant, yet they often paid tribute to those who oppressed them. They were husbandmen and tilled the ground, which rewarded their labour by yielding to them an abundance of increase. We shall stop here; and speak of the rest of Jacob's children in the next Lecture.

VII. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What were the words of the Text? Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.

2. Had Jacob any daughters? Yes, we read of one daughter, whose name was Dinah.

3. What was the character of Reuben? He was unstable as water and did not excel.

4. What is said of Simeon and Levi? "That they are brethren," that is, that their dispositions were alike, cruel and revengeful.

5. What is said of Judah? That his brethren should praise him.

6. Can you tell me of any remarkable persons that descended from the tribe of Judah? Yes, David, king of Israel, and Jesus Christ, the king of kings.

7. What is the meaning of Zebulon's name? It means *dwelling* or *habitation*.

8. What is the meaning of Issachar's name? It means *reward* or *recompense*.

9. Who was the Mother of these seven children? Leah.

VIII. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Let all young Girls avoid pride of dress, and vanity of mind. This has been the ruin of

of many others, besides Dinah. Let them learn to be keepers at home, and not gossipping about from house to house. If Dinah had been at home, he would not have been led into evil. If Dinah went out alone to see the daughters of the land, it was very imprudent. Those who are arrived at Dinah's age, should never be permitted to go any distance alone, they should always have a parent or a brother to protect them from danger and insult.

Let all young people learn how necessary it is that they should be decided characters, and not of an unstable or wavering disposition. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. Guard against a cruel and revengeful disposition. Be ye angry and sin not. If you are passionate, watch your temper and restrain your wrath. Pray against sin. See that you are among those whom your brethren and your friends will praise.

A HYMN.

COME Children, learn to fear the Lord,
And that your days be long
Let not a false or spiteful word
Be found upon your tongue.

Depart from mischief, practise love,
Pursue the works of peace,
So shall the Lord your ways approve,
And set your souls at ease.

His eyes behold you all the day,
His ears attend your cry,
Tho' young in years, yet if you pray,
The God of grace is nigh.

What tho' the sorrows here you take,
Are sharp and tedious too,
The Lord, who saves you all at last,
Is your supporter now

LECTURE

LECTURE XXXV.

JACOB'S CHILDREN.

PART THE SECOND.

GEN. 35. 22. *Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.*

WE have already related the History of seven of Jacob's Children. Of Didah we could say but little that was good, and when we cannot say any thing good of a person's character, it is always best to say as little as possible.

Reuben was an unstable character, sometimes good and sometimes bad. He wanted courage and resolution to govern himself, and therefore his Father thought him unfit to govern others, and gave the dominion or superiority to Judah. By right it belonged to Reuben, as the first born son, but he had lost this honor by a sinful conduct which his Father remembered on his dying bed. Simeon and Levi were cruel and bloody minded men. They were obstinate and headstrong in their dispositions. They were ringleaders in mischief and wickedness.

edness. There are boys of this character to be found in every town and village, but though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished. There is nothing praiseworthy in the former part of Judah's History. We cannot help admiring his affectionate and disinterested conduct before Joseph. For his intercession in behalf of Benjamin, and offering to remain a bondman instead of his younger brother, he was intitled to the praises of all his Brethren.

Of Zebulun and Issachar we have no particulars recorded. The one according to the predictions of dying Jacob, was to be a tribe accustomed to do business on the mighty waters. The other tribe was compared by him to a strong ass for their persevering labour and industry in cultivating their land, which rewarded them with an abundant increase.

I. DAN.

His mother's name was Bilhah. She was one of the handmaids which Laban gave to his daughter Rachel. His name signifies *judgment or one that judges.* Because Rachel said that God had judged her. That he had heard

her

her voice. Dan is compared to a kind of serpent which is called Cerastes, because it has two fleshy horns. It hides itself in the sand and fastens upon whatever animal passes over its retreat. Dan appears from his name to have been a wise, crafty, cunning man, an artful and mischievous boy, that is, if we might judge of the Father by the Children. The serpent is said to be more subtil than any beast of the field. Sampson was a strong man and very crafty also, he belonged to the tribe of Dan. It was by art and surprize that they conquered a city called Laish, and after having burnt it they erected another and called it Dan. In their way they robbed Micah of his Idols. "Dan" says, Jacob "shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a Serpent by the way; an adder in the path; that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward."

II. GAD.

His mother's name was Zilpah, she was the handmaid of Leah. His name signifies a *troop*. It also means *armed* and *prepared*. "Gad, said dying Jacob "a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last."

last." By which it was intimated that the tribe of Gad should be a warlike people. Many were the wars in which they were engaged. The Arabs, Ammonites and Moabites often fought with them, therefore that they might not be proud of their strength, Jacob tells them that they shall often be defeated but that at last they shall be victorious over their enemies. In the time of Saul and David, the Moabites and Ammonites were entirely subdued. We may suppose that the father of this tribe was a warlike man. That he was fond of a Military life. Thus the young Christian has a numerous troop of enemies to fight with, and though he may sometimes be overcome, yet he shall at last be made more than a conqueror, through Jesus the Captain of his Salvation. The martial spirit of Gad no doubt shewed itself in the attack on the city of Shechem and the barbarous murder of its inhabitants. A person may be brave and good, courageous and merciful. He will not contend with an enemy that is already conquered. He will spare his life if possible when he calls for mercy. Remember my brave boys, you who talk of being volunteers and soldiers

men in the army, who are looking forward to the command of a Company or a Regiment. Remember there is no army like that of the Lord of Hosts. No soldiers like the soldiers of Jesus Christ. No banner like that of the Cross. No sword like that of the Spirit. No helmet like the helmet of Salvation. No shield like the shield of Faith. No armour like the armour of God. No battles like those which you must fight with the adversary of your souls. No enemies so numerous, powerful, cruel, and persevering as the spiritual enemies of the young Christian. There is no victory so glorious as that which is obtained over these enemies. No reward so honorable or unfading as that Crown of Glory, that Palm of Victory, that Robe of Honour which Jesus the Captain of your Salvation will bestow at the last day on those who are conquerors in and through his precious blood. You shall march from the Field of Battle to Eternal Glory and Honour, Peace and Joy. This is the reward of all the soldiers of the Cross.

III. ASHUR.

He was the second son of Zilpah. Leah, when

when she gave him this name, said, "Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed." His name means *blessedness* or *happiness.* We are not told that Jacob or Leah experienced any more happiness in this son, than the rest. This we know that his lot was a happy lot, that he had a goodly heritage, the lines did indeed fall to him in pleasant places. His part of the land of Canaan not only yielded corn and wine and oil, but royal dainties. That is, some rare and beautiful fruits, such as kings are accustomed to have on their tables. His land not only furnished him with the necessaries, but also the luxuries of life. There are royal dainties in store for all those children that fear God and love his son Jesus. They will feast on dainties indeed, when they shall sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb. "Out of Ashur, said Jacob, his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties."

IV. NAPHTALI.

He was the second son of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid. His name signifies a *struggle.* Rachel had struggled with her sister for children, and therefore she gave him this name. It signifies also WRESTLING, and the blessing

ing which Jacob gave him signifies prevailing. Naphtali is a hind let loose, or a deer roaming at liberty; that is, he had been confined, but now has gained his liberty and roams at large. A deer is a beautiful creature with large branching horns. Naphtali is compared to this beautiful animal, which intimates that his portion of Canaan should be fruitful and that he should be a numerous tribe. When he went down into Egypt he had but four sons, but when he departed from that country about two hundred years afterwards, there were no less than fifty three thousand men capable of bearing arms.

V. JOSEPH.

He was Jacob's darling. His beloved son, by Rachel his beloved wife. His name signifies *increase* or *addition*. His mother called him Joseph, and said, the Lord shall add to me another son. He is compared by his father to a fruitful bough or tree planted by the side of a well of water, whose branches run over the wall. The archers who shot at him were his brethren, they envied him; though he was beloved by his father he was hated by his brethren. "But his bow abode in strength,

strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob: from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel. Even by the God of thy Father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty who shall bless thee with the blessing of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breast and of the womb: The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separated from his brethren." Who was separated from his family by malice—from his brethren by holiness, and separated by his God for his good.

VI. BENJAMIN.

He was Jacob's youngest son, by his beloved Rachel, who died as soon as Benjamin was born. His mother before she died called him Ben-oni, the son of my sorrow. But his father called him Benjamin the son of my right hand. How painful were the circumstances that attended his birth. His father was unwilling that his name

name should be the constant memorial of his beloved Rachel's death. When Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy corn, he kept Benjamin at home with himself, as he then thought he was the only child of his beloved Rachel that was alive. Joseph wished to see his brother and ordered the sons of Jacob to bring him the next time they came to buy corn. Jacob parted with him with much reluctance, but was at last persuaded to let him. To try how much his brethren loved him, Joseph gave him superior honours at his feast and then brought him into great danger apparently, by his silver cup being found in his sack. Soon afterwards he gave him five suits of apparel, and about 280 rupees in money.

VII. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. Where are the words of the Text to be found? In Gen. 35. 22d verse, last part.

2. What is Dan compared to? A serpent by the way, an adder in the path.

3. What is the meaning of Gad's name? A troop or company of armed men.

4. What was the land of Ashur to yield? Royal dainties.

5. What is Naphtali compared to? A hind,

or

or stag, branching horns, let loose and roaming at large with.

6. What is Joseph compared to? A fruitful bough, planted by a well, whose branches run over the wall.

7. What is Benjamin compared to? A wolf, Benjamin shall raven as a wolf.

8. Who was the mother of Dan and Naphtali? Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid.

9. Who was the Mother of Gad and Ashur? Zilpah, Leah's handmaid.

10. Who was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin? Rachel the beloved wife of Jacob.

11. What happened when Benjamin was born? Rachel died.

VIII, PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

What a difference there was in the dispositions and characters of Jacob's children. Judah is compared to a Lion, bold and courageous, lying down and enjoying the satisfaction of his power and success. A Lion is called the king of beasts. He is the terror of all when he roars. Issachar is compared to a strong Ass. This animal is said to be a stubborn beast, obstinate and stupid, but he is patient and persevering, he carries very heavy burdens

and

and is often treated with great cruelty. Dan is compared to a serpent that biteth the horse heels, to a deaf adder that stoppeth her ears, and will not hear. Naphtali is compared to a hind or deer. The flesh of this animal is called venison. It is a beautiful creature and very swift footed. It is often hunted to death. Benjamin is compared to a ravening wolf, and Joseph to a fruitful bough. Children, have you not heard of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lord Jesus Christ? Love that Lion. Have you not heard of Satan? Is he not compared to a Lion, a devouring Lion going about seeking whom he may devour. Avoid this Lion, and flee for refuge to the arms of Christ: to the bosom of Jesus, to the fold of this good shepherd, where the Lion cannot enter. Rejoice that this devouring, this raging Lion is chained, he may roar at good children, but he cannot hurt them. Jesus Christ will take care of them. See that you are like that beast that boys and men treat so cruelly, be patient under the injuries you receive, and persevering in all you undertake, in every good work. Take heed of that old serpent the devil, who is more cunning

ning and crafty now than when he tempted Eve in the garden of Eden. He has a thousand ways to lead the young into sin. A thousand golden snares to catch immortal souls. Watch and pray that you enter not in. to temptation. Stop not your ears to the voice of instruction. Hear the voice of Jesus. Hear the voice of Conscience. Hear the voice of God's Servant. Hear the words of the Bible. Hear, and you shall live. Take heed of being called ravening wolves. Children who eat too much or too fast, may be called ravening wolves. Children who are continually teazing, worrying those who are younger or better than themselves, may be compared to wolves. Whenever these animals get among a flock of sheep, they tear and worry many of them to death. May you all like Joseph, be as fruitful trees laden with the fruits of holiness, love and peace. Amen.

A HYMN.

A HYMN.

HAPPY the Children who betimes
Have learnt to know the Lord,
Who thro' his grace escape the crimes
Forbidden in his word.

Should they be early hence removed
He will their souls receive,
For they whom Jesus here hath lov'd
With him shall ever live.

The Saviour whom they trusted here
Shall wipe their tears away:
No night of darkness shall be there,
But one eternal day.

May we with them in bliss O Lord
For ever number'd be:
Taught by thy spirit and thy word,
To live alone to thee.

Come, holy spirit, and may each heart
Thy blessed temple prove;
Thy heav'nly likeness now impart,
And rule us all by love.

LECTURE XXXVI.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

GEN. 37. 4. *And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.*

WE now enter upon the interesting and affecting history of Joseph. A history which all young persons delight to read, but from which few derive that instruction which they ought. Let me hope you will attend to the few things which are now to be noticed in —this Lecture, relating to the History of Joseph—The life of Joseph is perhaps the most remarkable in the history of Man. It is too beautiful to be imitated by any writer that is not inspired by God. It is related with great simplicity, and abounds with the most interesting and affecting scenes. A writer who did not believe the Bible to be true, once said that he never read the History of Joseph without tears. The Mother of Joseph was dead. A child who has no mother, commands

mands our pity and deserves our love. We cannot but feel for Joseph, because he is deprived of the friend and guide of his youth. His father would, but cannot supply the loss of a beloved Mother. The child who knows and loves his Mother, must every moment feel and lament her loss. No voice so sweet, no smile so pleasant, no hand so soft, no frown, no displeasure so severe as her's. Joseph had lost his Mother, and was capable of feeling her loss, he knew her worth. He saw his Father's tears, and wept when the pillar was raised over the grave where she was buried. Such was Joseph when his History begins. His person and his youth makes us not only love him, but we are anxious for his future welfare.

I. We notice the EMPLOYMENT of JOSEPH.

Joseph being seventeen years old was feeding the flock with his brethren. How dangerous is the path of youth at the age of seventeen. How many snares and temptations surround him. How much depends on the principles in which he has been instructed ;—on the impressions that are made upon

his

his mind. His habits of life and general conduct will in a great measure be formed from the example of his companions.

Joseph is introduced to us as a shepherd, feeding his father's flock, engaged in the same employment as his brethren. "And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher were his companions. Brethren are not always the most suitable companions. Joseph's brethren were most of them, if not all of them, very wicked. Joseph was much with them, and their employment allowed them much leisure time to pursue those evil inclinations which had already discovered themselves on more than one occasion.

II. We must notice the conduct of Joseph's Brethren.

It was evil. "And Joseph brought unto his father their evil reports." What, was Joseph a tell-tale? Did he try to make mischief, and by representing the wicked conduct of his brethren, endeavor to gain all his father's love? No, Joseph was grieved at the

conduct

conduct of his brethren. He was vexed with their evil words and evil deeds, therefore he left them, could not bear to stay with them any longer. He had seen and heard such things as he knew were sinful.—What these things were we are not told. Jacob's sons did those things when absent from their father's presence, which they dare not do when at home. The mind of pious Joseph was hurt, for he appeared to have walked in the fear of God and to have remembered his Creator in the days of his youth. His father would naturally inquire the reason of his leaving his brethren and returning home. He told his father what he had seen and heard and it was an evil report, not a good one. How much must Jacob feel when he had heard what Joseph had to say.

II. JACOB'S great PARTIALITY for JOSEPH.

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children; because he was the Son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. This was very wrong in Jacob to love Joseph more than all his other children: and he was still more to be blamed for shewing his partiality

ity in such a manner as to give Joseph a finer coat than the rest of his brethren. Joseph might be more obedient, more affectionate and dutiful to him than the rest of his children, on that account he might love him more, but it was because he was the son of his old age. In this respect Benjamin ought to have had the largest share of Jacob's love, but Benjamin was but an infant child, scarcely twelve months old. Joseph was the only son that had any love to God in his heart, and that made him dutiful to his father. This coat of many colours was afterward the cause of great grief and pain to Jacob. It might be of small value in itself, but as a work of superior regard it only excited the envy and ill will of his brethren.

IV. The HATRED of JOSEPH'S BRETHREN.

"And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him. This was the consequence of Jacob's partiality and his giving Joseph a coat of many colours. Joseph might be called his father's favorite son, his darling boy. He loved him for the sake of his mother. Joseph

seph was probably the image of his mother "beautiful and well favored." It was the resemblance that he bore to his mother that gave him such a lovely appearance in the eyes of his father. He saw the living picture of his beloved Rachel in Joseph's face. His father did not keep him at home while his brethren were abroad in the field. No, he shared their labours and fatigues, and fed the flock of his father. Joseph did not bring the evil report of their conduct as a tale bearer desirous of making mischief and raising himself in his father's favor at their expence. No, it was either told in answer to his father's inquiries, or that his father might suitably reprove and admonish his brethren. When his brethren came home Jacob no doubt reproved them for their evil deeds, they knew who it was that told their father. Joseph's prudent, pious and dutiful conduct was a continual reproach to them, and they hated him. When they saw what Jacob gave to Joseph, their hatred was so much increased that they could not speak peaceably unto him. Conscious of his superior excellency they considered Jacob's approbation of his conduct as a silent but continual reproof

to

to them. "When a parent feels and discovers a partiality for one child above another he himself is the cause of all the evil that shall arise to wound his own peace. The object of his affection may become a spoiled child, a wicked youth and an abandoned character. Let the favorite child remember that he is laying the foundation of much unhappiness to himself, as well as the rest of the family."

V. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What is said of Jacob in the first verse of the chapter from whence the words of the Text are taken? And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger.

2. How old was Joseph when he fed his father's flock? Seventeen years old.

3. With whom did he feed his father's flock? With his brethren.

4. He had many brethren, was he with any of them in particular or all of them? And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and with the sons of Zilpah.

5. What account did Joseph bring to his father

ther of their conduct? And he brought unto his father their evil report.

6. Why did Jacob love Joseph more than all his children? Because he was the son of his old age.

7. How did Jacob shew his love for Joseph? And he made him a coat of many colours.

8. When his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, what effect had it on their minds? They hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him.

V. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Joseph was seventeen years old when he hated sin and loved God, when he would not be partaker with the crimes of his brethren. Sin is sin, when committed by a brother, and we must hate sin wherever we see it. He would not join in their wickedness. He was deaf to their persuasions, unmindful of their reproaches, and determined to fear God, to hate sin, and love holiness. His conduct and manner at that age was more prudent and dignified than the rest of Jacob's children. Though he was but a lad, he had

the

the wisdom and forethought of a man. A wise son maketh a glad father.—Favorite children are generally spoiled children, all their whims and fancies are complied with. They must have every thing they ask, for though it may be injurious to their health or their morals. They must not be crossed in any thing, lest they should hurt themselves by crying for it. There are many great boobies among favorite children. "A *father* has been known to undress and go every evening to bed with his only son, till he was ten or eleven years of age. When the darling had by this means been courted to sleep, the parent was at liberty to creep down again to his friends or his business." How much evil arises from the partiality of parents to one child above another. It is calculated to embitter the lives of both parents and children. Its evil consequences ought to be guarded against with all possible watchfulness and care, lest parents should have to lament the cause when they are unable to remove the effects of it. No outward mark of distinction should be made by parents in their children's dress. I mean they should not show they love one child more than another by

giving

giving them better or finer clothes than the rest.

"Showy dress is one of those vanities which fond parents are too apt to indulge, especially when their favorite children are handsomer than ordinary. Joseph was a beautiful young man, and therefore his fond father dressed him finer than the rest of his children, to set him off to the best advantage—Ridiculous and dangerous distinction. Ridiculous because nature requires no ornaments, and piety is not advanced by wearing fashionable clothes. Dangerous because it tended to excite the hatred and envy of Joseph's brethren and to fill his own mind with pride and vanity."* What a sad thing it is when children do that which is evil in the sight of God and man. Joseph acted the part of a friend and faithful brother who, when he dare not admonish his brethren himself because of his youth, told his father that he might do it "Friendly Monitors are often looked upon as enemies, those that hate to be reformed hate those that would reform them." Those that are beloved by God are often hated by

* See *Watkin's* Sacred Biography, page 165.

by the sight. When the actions of children are bad and their conduct wicked, how can they expect their parents will love them. It is a sad thing when brothers and sisters cannot speak peaceably to each other, and yet this is frequently the case. When children tell their parents of the bad words or actions of their brothers and sisters, it should not be from a desire of telling tales, but that they may not do so again. When it is done from duty and affection then it is done from a right motive and with a desire to do good. Children should strive to gain the love of their parents by an obedient and dutiful conduct towards them, by their love to God and their brothers and sisters. *Amen.*

[illegible]

A HYMN.

Love between Brothers and Sisters.

WHATEVER brawls disturb the street,
There should be peace at home;
Where sisters dwell and brothers meet,
Quarrels should never come.

Birds in their little nests agree,
And 'tis a shameful sight,
When children of one family
Fall out and chide and fight.

Hard names at first and threat'ning words
That are but noisy breath,
May grow to clubs and naked swords,
To murder and to death.

The devil tempts one mother's son
To rage against another,
So wicked Cain was hurried on
Till he had killed his brother.

The wise will let their anger cool,
At least before 'tis night,
But in the bosom of a fool,
It burns till morning light.

Pardon, O Lord, our childish rage,
Our little brawls remove,
That as we grow to riper age,
Our hearts may all be love. *Watts.*

LECTURE XXXVII.

JOSEPH'S DREAMS.

GEN. 37. 19. *And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.*

YOU have heard that at the age of 17 years, Joseph led a shepherd's life and fed sheep, the same employment in which his brethren were engaged; that he brought to his father a report of their conduct when absent from home, not by way of telling tales, but that his father might reprove and admonish them, which he dare not do, because he was so young. You have heard that his father loved him more than all his children, and made him a coat of many colours. When his brethren saw, that their father loved him more than all of his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. This hatred was increased by the relation of two remarkable dreams. They seemed to have impressed the mind of Joseph so much that he could not conceal them from his father and his

his family. They were also prophetical of his future greatness.

I. I shall relate these two remarkable DREAMS which JOSEPH DREAMED.

"And he said unto them, hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said unto him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words.

"And he dreamed yet another dream, and he told it to his brethren and said; Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold the sun and moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, what is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father

observed the saying." His brethren explained these dreams according to their true meaning. It is not necessary that any other explanation should be given at present.

We see that though his father gave him a gentle rebuke, yet they seemed to have made a very different impression on his mind from that which they made on Joseph's brethren. "They envied him and hated him yet the more."

II. We notice JOSEPH'S VISIT to his BRETHREN.

"And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said unto him, here am I. And he said unto him, go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem." Little did Jacob think when Joseph left his tent, that she should never return to that tent again, and that it would be three

and

and twenty years before he saw his face again. What a kind visit this was. Perhaps they had been absent from Hebron some days, and Jacob was anxious to know how they were. How dutiful and obedient is Joseph to his father's wishes and commands. Many a favorite but spoiled child, would have said, no, I won't go, they hate me, and why should I go and see, they will only call me names or beat me. No, tho' Joseph knew that they hated and envied him, yet he made no objection. No excuse that the distance was great, or the journey long and dangerous. He cheerfully obeyed his father and was ready to shew how much he loved and respected his brethren. To love those that hate us, and to pray for those that despitefully use us, is one of the precepts of Christ in his Sermon on the Mount. "And a certain man found him, and behold he was wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, what seekest thou? And he said, I seek my brethren, tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. And the man said, they are departed hence, for I heard them say, let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren and found them in Dothan." This shews

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prethren. No, he wanders
went from place to place,
ill he finds them. When he
an who met him that they
an, he went after them and
n. Let brotherly love con-
s about forty miles from He-
as about eight miles further,
velled a journey of forty-
his brethren.

r the RETURN which Jo-
made for this KIND VISIT.
aw him afar off, even before
hem, they conspired against
nd they said one to another:
er cometh. Come now there-
m, and let us cast him into
will say some evil beast hath
we shall see what will become
nd Reuben heard it, and he
delivered

delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. And Reuben said unto them, shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, and deliver him to his father again." See, how his brethren returned him evil for good: for his love they became his enemies: when they saw him afar off they conspired against him. It was not in anger, no, it was a deliberate plan. He that hateth his brother is a murderer: Is not this true? Did they not conspire to take away Joseph's life. How cruel was their design. What, would nothing less than Joseph's blood cool their anger and quench their thirst of revenge! Joseph had done them no harm. He could not help his father's fondness. He wore the coloured coat, it is true, but then it was in obedience to his father's wishes. How ungrateful were they for the trouble he had taken in coming nearly fifty miles to see how they did. They saw him not as a brother, as bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh, but as the favorite of their father, one that he loved more than all his children. See how scornfully they

speak of him: "Behold, this dreamer cometh." These dreams were uppermost in their thoughts, they could not endure the thought of their being fulfilled, and therefore conspire to take away his life, that he may not have dominion over them. They agreed together to conceal the murder by a lie: "We will say some evil beast hath devoured him." They were worse than those evil beasts on which they meant to lay the blame of Joseph's death. The most savage animals do not devour those of their own kind; they do not eat each other. Tigers do not eat tigers. Vultures do not devour vultures. Jackals do not eat each other. But these unnatural, cruel and bloody minded men will kill Joseph; they will take away his life, and shed innocent blood without cause.

IV. The RECEPTION JOSEPH met with from his Brethren.

"And it came to pass when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him: And they took him and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there

there was no water in it. And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt."

When Joseph came to his brethren, it was with a smiling countenance, with pleasure in his heart. They shew no signs of joy. No running to meet Joseph, no affectionate and brotherly embrace, no inquiries after the welfare of their aged parent. No, like robbers and murderers, they seize him, and roughly taking off that envied coat, that coat of many colours which their aged parent had given him, they hurry him away, and, regardless of his tears and supplications, they cast him into the pit. In vain did he beg them to pity and spare his life, they would not hear him. It was by Reuben's interference that his life was spared, and he intended to take him out of this pit as soon as possible and send him back to his father. The pit was empty; if there had been any water in it, Joseph might have been drowned; but there was no water in it.

They sat down to eat bread. How could they eat while Joseph was in the pit, hungry and weary, weeping and expecting to be starved to death. I almost wonder they were not afraid of being choked by their food after what they had done; but sin not only shuts up the bowels of compassion, but hardens the heart and blunts the feelings of every human heart.

V. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. How many dreams had Joseph? Two, one concerning the sheaves of corn bowing to his sheaf, and the other concerning the sun, moon and eleven stars bowing to him and making obeisance to him.

2. What did his father say to his dreams? His father rebuked him, and said unto him, shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren, indeed bow down to thee to the earth?

3. What did his brethren say? They envied him and hated him yet the more, and said one to another, behold, this dreamer cometh.

4. Where did Joseph go to visit his brethren? To Shechem.

5. Where did he find them? In Dothan.

6. When he came to them, what did they do to him? Stripped him of his coat of many colours, and cast him into a pit.

7. After they had cast him into a pit, what did they do? They sat down to eat bread.

8. Who proposed to put Joseph into a pit? Reuben, that he might take him out and deliver him to his father.

9. What happened while they were eating bread? A company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.

VI. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

We see the progress of sin. First, they hate Joseph, and hatred increases more and more, especially when they heard his dreams. They then call him "the dreamer," by way of reproach, and last of all they conspire together to take away his life, and this must be concealed by a lie. Envy, malice, hatred, cruelty, murder and falsehood, all these sins they commit, and to these they added opposition

to the divine will, they rebel against God, who intimated by those dreams that all the rest of the family should be dependent upon him. They call him the dreamer, here comes the dreamer. Not here comes our brother Joseph, but, behold, this dreamer cometh.—It is very sinful and wicked for children to call each other names. It is a sin that God will punish, it is a thing that will make your brothers and sisters very angry, and in order to revenge themselves, they may do some thing to you that you may feel the effects of it all the days of your life. Live in love and peace among yourselves. Love each other as much as you can, and I am sure you will be much more happy than Joseph's brethren.

A HYMN.

Love and Hatred.

NOW by the bowels of my God,
His sharp distress, his sore complaints,
By his last groans, his dying blood,
I charge my soul to love the saints.

Clamour, and wrath, and war, begone,
Envy and spite for ever cease;
Let bitter words no more be known
Amongst the saints, the sons of peace.

The spirit, like a peaceful dove,
Flies from the realms of noise and strife;
Why should we vex and grieve his love,
Who seals our souls to heav'nly life?

Tender and kind be all our thoughts,
Through all our lives let mercy run:
So God forgives our num'rous faults.
For the dear sake of Christ his Son. *Watts.*

LECTURE XXXVIII.

JOSEPH SOLD FOR A SLAVE.

GEN. 37. 28. *Then there passed by Midianites, merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites, for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.*

YOU have heard why Joseph was called "the dreamer." Have you read his dreams? If you had dreamed two such remarkable dreams, I think you would have done as Joseph did, told it to your father and mother, and brothers and sisters. I am not quite sure, whether you would not also have told your school-fellow, but I rather think you would. Joseph's father saw that his brethren were angry, and in order to soften their resentment, he thought it necessary to rebuke Joseph. He intimated that it was but a dream, and his mother who had been long dead, being brought in, that it could not be fulfilled, whereas no doubt Leah was alive; and

and by the sun, moon and eleven stars, the whole family was intended. His brethren envied him, but his father observed the saying; like Mary he treasured up these dreams in his mind, and pondered on them in his heart. The consequence was that Joseph's brethren gave him a new name, and call him the DREAMER.

His father sent Joseph to Shechem, to see if his brethren were well; see whether the people of the country had not fallen upon them and killed them, for the murder they committed in slaying all the males of the city of Shechem with the edge of the sword. —Not finding them at Shechem, he went to Dothan, in which place he heard from a man, whom he met with while seeking for his brethren, that they had departed. They see him at a distance, and agree together to slay him, and conceal his death from their father, by a lie. As soon as he came up to them, they seized upon him and took off his coat of many colours, and cast him into a pit. This was done by the advice of Reuben. They then sat down to eat bread, and while

they

they were feasting themselves, some merchants passed by, going down to Egypt, with spices. Seeing these men, Judah proposed that they should sell Joseph to them and not take away his life. Let us attend,

I. TO JUDAH'S PROPOSAL TO SELL JOSEPH. "And Judah said unto his brethren, what profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh: And his brethren were content." This was Judah's proposal; they thought by selling Joseph to these merchants, that he would be carried so far away as not to be able to return to bear rule over them. They expected never to hear of Joseph any more. It will be less guilt, more gain to us, if we sell. Why did Joseph's brethren want money? Were they poor? Would not their father have given them money if they had asked him for some? Certainly he would. There was no necessity for them to sell their brother, in order to obtain money to supply their wants. They had provisions with them. They thought if

Joseph

Joseph was sold for a slave, he would never be their Lord. The Lord wonderfully kept them from taking away Joseph's life, by puting it into the heart of Ruben to plead, that he might be put in a pit; but if Joseph had remained there, he might have died of hunger and fatigue. Reuben intended to take him out of this, and had left his brethren for the purpose of going to the pit and saving his life. God put it into Judah's heart to propose to his brethren, that they should sell him: they all consented to this, (one only being absent) and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver. Jesus Christ was sold by one of the same name for thirty pieces of silver. "The wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of that wrath he will restrain."

II. REUBEN'S DISTRESS AT NOT FINDING JOSEPH IN THE PIT.

"And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. And he returned unto his brethren and said: The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?" Reuben, it seems, went

round

round some other way to the pit, and before he came to it, they had gone a nearer way, and had taken Joseph out of the pit and sold him to the merchants. Reuben rent his clothes as an expression of his uncommon concern and grief; for being the eldest, he expected no doubt that his father would question him concerning Joseph when he went home. He seemed to have been sincerely grieved when he found that Joseph was not in the pit, he returned in an agony of grief, and laments his loss with the feelings of a brother. They, it seems, soon pacified Reuben, and we hear no more of his lamentations for Joseph. The love of money induced them to sell their brother for a slave, so they sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver, the value of which was not more than eight or ten rupees; so that they did not get more than a rupee each, by the bargain they had made. This sum was four rupees less than the price of a common slave.

III. THE BASE AND CRUEL DECEPTION OR IMPOSITION WHICH THEY PUT ON THEIR AGED FATHER. "And they took Joseph's coat and killed a kid of the goats, and

and dipped the coat in the blood. And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This we have found: know now, whether it be thy son's coat or no."

They wish to make their father and others believe that Joseph was torn to pieces by a wild beast. They sent this coat of many colours to their father, with one colour more than it had before, and that was a bloody colour. They say they had found it. They inform their father of Joseph's supposed death in the most undutiful and unfeeling manner. This we have found: know now whether it be THY SON'S coat or no! Not Joseph's coat. Not our brother's coat. No, but thy son's coat, as if they would reproach their father for his partiality, and seemed to say that Joseph alone was considered as his son. Let those who are parents place themselves in Jacob's state, and think how very painful his feelings must have been when he saw Joseph's bloody coat.

IV. JACOB'S GRIEF for the LOSS of JOSEPH.

"And he knew it, and said, it is my son's coat;

coat; an evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces." No, Jacob, it is no evil beast, no lion, no tiger, no wolf, but men more cruel than tigers have done that to Joseph, which they had concealed from him. Alas, what hearts must they possess to see the grief of their aged parent, and not relieve the painful feelings of his mind by telling the truth! Reuben no doubt felt more than the rest, how could he stand by and keep silence; yet he said nothing: perhaps he might be afraid that if he discovered what they had done to Joseph, that they would take away his life. "And Jacob rent his clothes and put on sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters, (that is, Dinah and his son's wives) rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted: and he said, for I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him."

V. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. Who proposed that Joseph should be sold for a slave? Judah.

2. Why did he propose that Joseph should

should be sold? He said, what profit shall we have if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood.

3. Did they agree to Judah's proposal? Yes, "And his brethren were content."

4. To whom did they sell Joseph? To merchantmen going to Egypt.

5. For how much did they sell Joseph? For twenty pieces of silver.

6. Who was absent when Joseph was sold? Reuben, who had gone to the pit another way, in order to save Joseph's life.

7. When he came to the pit and found Joseph was not there, what did he do? He rent his clothes and returned to his brethren; and said, the child is not; and I, whither shall I go.

8. What did they do to Joseph's coat? They killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood.

9. What did they do this for? To make their father believe that Joseph was torn in pieces by an evil beast.

10. Did Jacob think so when he saw the coat?

coat? Yes. He said, it is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

VI. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Whenever you are tempted to commit sin, think of what Judah said. What profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? What profit is there in sin? What are the wages of sin? The wages of sin is death, not temporal and spiritual death only, but eternal death. To be always dying, and yet never dead. To be always in the fire of God's wrath, and yet never consumed. What profit is there in sin? What shall we be the richer, though we may gain thousands of gold and silver by the commission of iniquity. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Sin is unprofitable. It cannot be concealed. Your sin will find you out either in this world, or that which is to come. Sin is followed by sorrow and shame. Sin, must be repented of, or it cannot be pardoned. The brethren of Joseph strove to hide their sin by

a lie, but many years afterwards it found them out. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall find mercy. Joseph's brethren could not feel for him, they could not feel for Reuben when they saw his grief, nor for their aged parent when they saw that he put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days. How could they pretend to sympathize with their father on account of Joseph's death when they knew he was alive. How easy was it for them to have said, Joseph is *alive*, he indeed is sold into Egypt; but it will be easy for us to take a sum of money and go and ransom him. He can soon be set at liberty and restored to you. No, their hearts were hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Miserable comforters indeed they all were. How can they weep at that which gives them pleasure in their own minds. Revenge is said to be sweet; if so, we cannot but think that Joseph's brethren had a full cup to drink; they had taken revenge on Joseph and their father also; but there is a voice that says, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.

A HYMN.

A HYMN.

Providence equitable and kind.

THRO' all the various shifting scene
Of life's mistaken ill or good,
Thy hand, O God, conducts unseen
The beautiful vicissitude.

Thou givest with a paternal care,
Howe'er unjustly we complain,
To each their necessary share
Of joy and sorrow, health and pain.

Trust we to youth or friends or power,
Fix we on this terrestrial ball?
When most secure the coming hour,
When thou see'st fit may blast them all

When lowest sunk, with grief and shame,
Fill'd with affliction's bitter cup,
Lost to relations, friends and fame,
Thy powerful hand can raise us up.

Thy powerful consolations cheer,
Thy smiles suppress the deepest sigh,
Thy hand can dry the trickling tear,
That secret wets the mourner's eye.

All things on earth and all in heaven,
On thy eternal will depend,
And all for greater good were given,
And all shall in thy glory end. R. M.

LECTURE

LECTURE XXXIX.

JOSEPH APPOINTED OVERSEER.

GEN. 39. 4. *And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.*

JOSEPH's Brethren sold him, and the merchants who bought him, sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharoah's, and Captain of the Guard. We are not informed of any particulars concerning the journey of Joseph to Egypt. We are not told how he liked this large and beautiful city. Nothing is said concerning Potiphar, only that he was an officer of Pharoah's, and Captain of the Guard. We know not what price he paid for Joseph, but we know that he had obtained by this means a pious and valuable servant. And that he soon found by experience that the blessing of the Lord maketh rich.

We shall notice,

I. JOSEPH'S HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY.

"And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was

was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian."

We find that Joseph submitted to the will of God, that he was cheerful and contented, active and diligent; as a servant, he endeavored by every means in his power to make himself useful and agreeable to his Master. How many young men would have rebelled against God, murmured at his dealings with them, they would become sullen, ill tempered and cross. Joseph was a happy man, though he was a servant, and at first he did many things that he had not been used to do, and which was only fit for the lowest servant of his Master to be employed in; but the Lord was with him, he made Joseph happy and prosperous; he gave him such wisdom and prudence as to enable him to do all things right, in the best manner, with the least trouble and in the shortest period of time, so that his work was soon done and done well. Every thing he did, prospered. It was done as it should, and the effects of it was evident to all. He was a house servant, so that all might see and observe him. He did his duty to his master and his God. The Lord was with Joseph, and

Joseph

Joseph was often with the Lord. He prayed to God and thought upon his name, so that there is reason to think that he was not only diligent in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

II. JOSEPH'S PIETY AND FIDELITY.

"And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." Joseph was not like many young persons in India, ashamed of his religion. He made no secret of it: All who saw Joseph knew that he was remarkably pious, prudent, honest and faithful. He acted like one who knew that the eyes of Jehovah were upon him, like one that walked in the fear of God all the day long, like one that cared for reproach and ridicule on account of his religion. Many young persons in India will suffer themselves to be laughed out of their religion. But he that is ashamed of me and of my word (saith Jesus Christ) in this adulterous and simple generation: of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his father with the holy angels.

Many young Men of Joseph's age are exactly

actly in his situation as to religion. They go to their stations where there is perhaps no Church, no Chaplain, no meeting together for the public worship of God. They are surrounded by idols and idolaters: they see no respect paid to religion, to God, or to his holy day. That they are apt to forget God, lose all reverence for his day, all desire of attending on public worship.—Let them act like Joseph and not be afraid, letting their equals and their superiors see that they are not ashamed of God, of their religion or their principles. Joseph's Master saw that the Lord was with him. Joseph's fellow servants saw that the true God was with him. It was not in the power of the gods of Egypt to make Joseph prosperous, and honest and faithful; but the fear of God is not only the beginning of wisdom, but the source of every Christian virtue and spring of every Christian duty in every rank and condition of life.

III. JOSEPH'S REWARD and POTIPHAR'S BLESSINGS. "And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and all that he had he put into his hand."—Thus Joseph was raised from a slave or common servant to be

th

the chief or head servant. He was made OVERSEER, that is, one that overlooks. He overlooked the rest of the servants to see that they did their duty. There was a time when Joseph was overlooked by another in the same manner in which he now overlooked the rest of the servants. He was not a hard-hearted overseer like those that are usually put over the Negroes in the West Indies; no, he was kind and condescending, not proud, cruel and overbearing. It was a happy thing for those servants who were put under Joseph's care. He would not treat them ill. Joseph was a young man, quite a youth, but the Lord was with him. Potiphar saw this and did not despise either his youth or his religion. Let us now see the favor that the Lord shewed to Potiphar. He blessed him for Joseph's sake. "And it came to pass from the time that he made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had: that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field." Whatever substance Potiphar had when Joseph came, it was blessed and increased.

His

His cattle increased abundantly. The produce of the earth was much greater, every thing was altered for the better. Order, regularity, peace and harmony at home. Abundant crops and numerous flocks and herds in the fields. And all this for Joseph's sake. Thus Laban was blessed for the sake of Joseph's father, and thus poor sinners are blessed with peace and joy, pardon and salvation, the favor of God and eternal life, for the sake of Jesus Christ the son of God.

IV. POTIPHAR'S CONFIDENCE in JOSEPH'S HONESTY and GOOD MANAGEMENT.— "And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught that he had, save the bread which he did eat." Joseph had all the care and trouble, and his master all the pleasure and enjoyment. It was the best thing that Potiphar could do, to put all into Joseph's hands, for he knew that it would prosper better in his hands than in his own. Good and faithful servants will always be rewarded with honour and exaltation. At the same time Joseph had a master in heaven as well as on earth, whose eyes were always upon him,

whose

whose ears were open to all his prayers and thanks. By this means Joseph became a man of business. He learned how to manage an estate first, before he governed a kingdom. Thus God fitted and prepared Joseph for being governor over all the land of Egypt.

V. The description given us of JOSEPH'S PERSON. "And Joseph was a goodly person and well favored." He was a handsome young man. This is the description that was given of his mother. "Rachel was beautiful and well favored." He was in the bloom and vigour of youth, in the prime of life. He was not only comely in his person, but polite in his manners. There was a dignity and kindness in his countenance that command at once the love and respect of all who knew him. There was nothing assuming or overbearing in his conduct. By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honour and life. He was humble and kind to all, diligent and active in his business. Joseph did not forget God in his prosperity—No, he lived in his fear, and it was that alone which preserved him safe. In the day of prosperity be watchful, and in the day

of

of adversity consider. Let not beauty be your ruin. It often is a snare to those who possess it. Let young men who are handsome not presume upon their beauty. Let them not be proud of it, let them not use it as a snare to draw others to sin. Many have fair faces but wicked hearts.

VI. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. Who was it that bought Joseph? Potiphar, an officer of Pharoah.

2. What was Potiphar? Captain of the Guard.

3. Who was it that was with Joseph? The Lord was with Joseph.

4. And what was the consequence of the Lord's being with him? He was a prosperous Man.

5. What is meant by the Lord's being with Joseph? The Lord blessed Joseph and gave him wisdom.

6. When his Master saw that the Lord was with him, what did he do? Made him overseer over his house and all that he had.

7. What is an overseer? One that overlooks others.

8. After Potiphar had made Joseph overseer, what

what was the consequence? The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake, and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field.

9. What is here said of Joseph's person? And Joseph was a goodly person and well favored.

VII. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Joseph's Brethren stripped him of his coat of many colours, but could not take away from him the wisdom and grace which God gave him. You may be separated from your parents, but none can separate you from the presence of your heavenly Father. If God is with you, you will be happy and contented in every situation. It is God alone that can prosper what we do. We can do nothing without him. If he withholds his blessings, what we do will be a curse and a loss to us. Industry and honesty is the way to thrive and get forward in the world. It is the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich. We ought to shew favour to those, with whom we behold the presence of God. He that is faithful in little, will be faithful in much. It is a great relief to men in business when they have

have trusty servants. Good servants may be blessings in the places which they fill. Here is a wicked family blessed for the sake of a good servant. Let all servants imitate Joseph's prudence, faithfulness and humility. Let not beauty become a snare to you.

A HYMN.

A HYMN.

For a Servant.

LET Servants who their Master love
Be humble, just and kind,
And know that all must serve the Lord,
Who would his favour find.

Yet I would bless thy holy name,
And do thy holy will;
For thou for ever art the same,
Thou wilt be with me still.

Prosper my way and keep my heart,
From ev'ry thought that's vain;
Help me to act a faithful part,
That I may favor gain.

Bless thou the Master whom I serve,
And let him share thy grace;
And let my fellow servants learn,
To seek the Saviour's face.

May I remember thou art near,
My actions thou wilt spy;
Help me to keep my conscience clear,
And fear to tell a lie.

For Christ assumed a servant's form,
That he for man might die;
The pious servant may rejoice,
His Master lives on high.

R. M.

LECTURE

LECTURE XL.

JOSEPH IN PRISON.

GEN. 39. 20. *And Joseph's Master took him and put into the prison, a place where the King's prisoners were bound: and he was there in prison.*

THERE are many changes in this world. It was but a little while ago that you heard that Potiphar made Joseph overseer over his house and all that he had, and now we read that he put him in prison. How is this; surely Joseph has not robbed his Master. Surely he has not beat his fellow servants. No, he was falsely accused of breaking the Seventh Commandment; and because he would not do it, he was accused of a crime which he had not committed, and when enticed to sin, he had nobly replied, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God." Did you ever say so when you were enticed to commit sin. Hear the words of Solomon: My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Joseph would not consent to sin.

I. The PLACE where Joseph was put in prison, in the state prison, "a place where the king's prisoners were bound." A prison is a dismal doleful place. It is a very strong place. There are generally two kinds of prisoners in a prison, debtors and felons. That is, persons confined for debt, and persons confined for robbery and murder. Joseph was not in debt. Joseph had not robbed his master. Joseph had not killed any of the servants. The walls of a prison are very strong, many cubits thick, generally of stone. The windows are made of iron, that the prisoners may not break through; yet some times they make their escape. They sleep on iron bedsteads, and if they are thieves or murderers, they have heavy irons put on their legs, like those which you see the convicts wear that mend the roads. It is supposed that Joseph had irons put on him at first, but they were afterwards taken off.

* II. The PERSON who put JOSEPH in PRISON. "And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison." By the tongue of falsehood his master was prevailed to cast this

* See Psalm 105. 18.

this injured, faithful, pious, innocent young man into prison. What a change in his condition! Here we behold Joseph confined in a dungeon in a strange land, without a friend to speak for him or care about him. O, thinks he, if my father knew this, how it would grieve him. Not only was he cast into prison, but his feet were hurt with fetters, being laid in iron. His feet were galled, his heart was grieved, and probably he expected nothing but death. This was the punishment inflicted on those who were guilty of the crime of which he was accused. God interposed, he saved his life. He thus proclaimed his innocence. Had Joseph been put in any other prison, perhaps Pharoah would never have heard of him.

III. The FAVOR which JOSEPH found with the KEEPER of the PRISON. "But the lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper." Though he was confined in a dungeon, yet the Lord was with him. It is a very great relief to the mind of a person confined in a prison, to know that he is innocent of the crime

laid

laid to his charge. It is also a great comfort to be allowed to see his friends, to write to them and speak to them. — Joseph had a powerful and almighty friend in the Lord; he was with Joseph, he comforted him. Joseph could pray to God in a prison. He could enjoy peace of mind and joy in the Lord, even in a prison. The Lord made the keeper kind to Joseph, he did not appear like a guilty person, and from what he saw of Joseph and what he heard from his fellow servants, he was no doubt inclined to think him innocent of the crime laid to his charge.

IV, JOSEPH made TURNKEY. Those persons who lock and unlock the cells of the prisoners, who carry them their food and wait upon them, are called TURNKEYS. "And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. This was Joseph's remarkable office, and it is not a very desirable place. In England the Turnkeys in a jail are exposed to more danger than the keeper of the prison. They are sometimes obliged to go armed with

pistols and swords to the cells of some of their prisoners. If he is not a bold, strong and courageous man, he is in danger of being overcome by those who are hardened in sin. It is an office which requires confidence and fidelity, firmness and sobriety. Joseph soon gained the confidence and good will of the keeper, and though he was at first severely treated, yet afterwards he was made both comfortable and useful. All who were under his care were no doubt treated with great kindness; probably he gave them good counsel and advice, if so, they must have profited under his instructions and example. Many have been more happy in a prison than they have in a palace. Joseph was both happy and useful. Such was the confidence that the jailor placed in him, that he looked not to any thing that was under his hands, because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper.

V. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What is a prison? A place of confinement.

2. Who put Joseph into prison? And Joseph's

seph's master took him and put him into prison.

3. Into what prison was Joseph put? Into a place where the King's prisoners were bound.

4. Who was with Joseph in prison? The Lord was with Joseph.

5. What did the Lord do for Joseph in the prison? Shewed him his mercy and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

6. What did the keeper of the prison do for Joseph? Made him TURNKEY. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison.

7. How did the keeper shew his confidence in Joseph? The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hands: because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper.

V. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

"How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God." Whenever Satan tempts you to sin, remember these words. Whenever wicked boys or girls would tempt you to sin, remember these words. Avoid the object of temptation. Flee from the place of tempta-

tion. Pray against the time of temptation. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it, are the issues of life. Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. There was great sincerity, wisdom, resolution, perseverance and grace in Joseph's conduct. Follow his example, imitate him, and if you are falsely accused God will vindicate your character, he will make your innocence known. Only let it be your concern not to displease him; remember he is every where present.

O may these thoughts possess your breast,
Where'er you rove, where'er you rest;
Nor let thy weaker passions dare
Consent to sin, for God is there. *Watts.*

Though Joseph was put in prison, laid in irons, and might have been put to death, yet the Lord was with him. The Lord shewed him mercy. Unless the Lord show mercy to you, my dear children, you must be shut up in the prison of hell for ever and ever. Satan will shew you no favor, he will not treat you with

with the least kindness. He will torment you with pleasure and laugh at your misery. The Lord gave Joseph favor in the sight of the keeper. Perhaps Joseph, by means of his conversation and example, was the means of converting the Jailor from idolatry to the worship of the true and living God. Good men and good children will try to do good wherever they are. They will be a blessing to all. Paul and Silas sung the praises of God in a prison. All those who have conscience void of offence both towards God and man, may sing in a prison as well as in a palace. Take heed lest you should at last be confined in the prison of Hell. Seek mercy from God in and through Christ, and you shall obtain it. Seek the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. Say with all your heart, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner. Amen.

A HYMN.

The Mysteries of Providence.

GOD moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the Sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will

Ye fearful minds, fresh courage take,
The clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy and will break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace,
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast
Unfolding every hour,
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain,
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain. *Cowper.*

LECTURE

LECTURE XLI.

THE BUTLER AND THE BAKER.

GEN. 40. 4. *And the Captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; and they continued a season in ward.*

THAT is the Butler and the Baker that were put under Joseph's immediate charge. He was responsible for their safety; he waited on them daily to supply their wants. This is one of the most remarkable Chapters in this Book. It contains the History of the means by which Joseph was delivered from prison and made Governor of Egypt. There is no station so low but the Lord can exalt us in it. Who would have thought of Joseph's advancement in a prison. We are told that "it came to pass after these things, that the Butler of the King of Egypt, and his Baker, had offended their Lord, the King of Egypt. And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the Butlers, and against the chief of the Bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the Captain of the guard, into the

prison, the place where Joseph was bound." Then follow the words I have read to you, contained in the fourth verse.

We know not the crime for which the Butler and the Baker were put in prison: some think that they were accused of attempting to take away the king's life by poison. Probably they were only suspected, and on that account confined in the state prison, till the matter was examined, till they were brought to trial. It seems that Potiphar had the charge of this prison; that it was near his house, or else formed a part of the building in which he resided. The keeper of the prison was probably a person employed under Potiphar. If the Jailor was the deputy of Potiphar, then Joseph was the deputy of the Jailor. It should seem from his committing these prisoners to Joseph's care, that he was convinced by some means or other, that Joseph was innocent, and that he had been unjustly accused. It is very remarkable that the Butler and the Baker should be put into the same prison where Joseph was confined. In this we see the hand of God. If they

had

had gone to another prison, he would not have had an opportunity of interpreting their dreams. In this prison, Joseph is said to have served the Butler and the Baker; that is, being prisoners of rank, he carried them their daily provisions, and so he was in the habit of seeing and conversing with them every day.

I. We shall notice the BUTLER'S DREAM.

One morning Joseph went to visit them as usual, and observing that there was a look of sadness or melancholy in their faces, he kindly inquired the reason; they told him that during the night they had each of them dreamed a remarkable dream, they were anxious to know the meaning, but being confined, they could not apply to those who made it their business to interpret dreams.

And the chief Butler told his dream to Joseph, and said unto him, "in my dream behold a vine was before me, and in the vine were three branches; and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes. And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I

took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand."

Joseph requested the Butler to relate his dream, and at the same time told him, that interpretations belonged to God. They had complained that there was no man that could interpret their dreams, but Joseph told them that interpretations belonged unto God; he alone can foretel things to come, and he can communicate the power of interpreting dreams to whom he pleases. Joseph was now a prisoner, but also had been a dreamer as well as they, and the fulfilment of his dreams was yet to come. Thus he reproved them for looking to the pretended wise men of Egypt, instead of having come and offered to himself, as the servant of the true God, to be their interpreter. The dream of the Butler related to his past employment. It was probably the custom of the Butler to press the full ripe grapes immediately into Pharaoh's cup, and present it to him with the real juice of the vine. They were not acquainted with the present mode of refining the wine after it is pressed from the grape. Such was the simplicity

plicity of the age in which Joseph lived. All dreams are not alike, the greater part of them are unworthy of regard. Yet God has sometimes made use of a dream to impress the mind of man, to bring back his soul from the pit, and to enlighten him with the light of the living.

II. JOSEPH'S INTERPRETATION.

The Butler having told his dream to Joseph, he proceeds to tell him the meaning of it. "And Joseph said, this is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days: yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shall deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand." Thus he foretold, that the Butler should be delivered from prison and restored to his office. The rapid budding and blossoming of the vine, and ripening of the grapes, seems to have fixed the interpretation to *three* days, rather than weeks, months, or years: and the actual delivery of the cup into Pharaoh's hand, plainly denoted, that the event would be prosperous and good. What must have been the feelings of

of the Butler, when he heard this interpretation given to his dream: surely his countenance was no longer sad, he must have felt great pleasure, and the feelings of his mind would be seen by a cheerful countenance. Surely if any of the diviners or magicians of Egypt had given this interpretation, they would have required a large reward, but Joseph only made a request in behalf of himself.

III. JOSEPH'S REQUEST.

"But think of me, when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me to Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also I have done nothing, that they should put me into the dungeon." Joseph did not ask for any money. No, he did not ask a present. If any of the Bramins of this country had given such an interpretation, they would have required some hundreds, if not some thousands of Rupees. He doth not say, Bring me into Pharaoh's house. Get me a place at court. No, only bring me out of this house. Let

me

me no longer be in prison; make mention of me to Pharaoh. Speak a good word for me, if it be in your power: do me a kindness, if it be in your way. He casts no reflection on his brethren; he only says, I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews. I was brought here by force. He casts no reflection upon her, who had been the cause of his imprisonment. He only asserts his own innocence, by saying, "And here also I have done nothing, that they should put me into the dungeon."

IV. The BAKER'S DREAM and JOSEPH'S INTERPRETATION.

"When the chief Baker saw the the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head: And in the uppermost basket there was all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head. And Joseph answered and said, this is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days: yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head from off thee, and shall hang

hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee." These were heavy tidings for the poor Baker. No wonder he looked so sad, perhaps his conscience told him he was guilty, and had nothing but death to expect. Joseph could not give a good interpretation to a bad dream; he must be faithful and tell the truth. The bake-meats being eaten by the birds and not brought to Pharaoh, was an unfavorable sign. The Baker received from Joseph a warning that he must die. Joseph could also tell how to prepare himself for death, by seeking that mercy and forgiveness at the hands of God, which he would seek for in vain at the hands of Pharaoh.

V. The remarkable FULFILMENT of these DREAMS, according to the interpretation which Joseph had given.

"And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birth day, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief Butler and of the chief Baker among his servants. And he restored the chief Butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand;

hand: but he hanged the chief Baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them." Whether they had a trial given them, or whether their fate was determined by the command of Pharaoh, we know not. You will be ready to inquire whether the Butler did speak to the King in behalf of poor Joseph, whom he had left in prison; you shall hear. "Yet did not the chief Butler remember Joseph, but forgat him." Where was his gratitude for Joseph's kindness? Where was his pity, his bowels of mercy for the poor innocent young Hebrew, who was not guilty of the crime laid to his charge? Where was his regard to justice or truth? If he made any promise to Joseph, he had broken his promise. What is man! Such is the friendship of the world: and those who put their trust in creatures, instead of placing their confidence in God, will certainly be disappointed.

VI. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. Where did Pharaoh put the Butler and the Baker? "And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound."

2. What answer did they make to Joseph when he said to them, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day? "And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it."

3. Who was it that interpreted their dreams? Joseph.

4. What was the interpretation of these dreams? That the chief Butler should be restored to his butlership, and the Baker hanged on a tree.

5. How long was it to be before this should come to pass? Three days.

6. On what day did the fulfilment of these dreams take place? On Pharaoh's birth-day.

7. What did Pharaoh do on that day? He made a feast unto all his servants.

8. What induced the Baker to tell his dream? "When the chief baker saw that the interpretation (of the Butler's dream) was good."

9. What request did Joseph make to the Butler? "But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto

unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house."

10. Did the chief Butler think on Joseph? No. "Yet did not the chief Butler remember Joseph, but forgat him."

VII. Practical Address.

To God all hearts are open; before him no secrets are hid. He knoweth all things, past, present, and to come. It was God that made the Butler and Baker dream these dreams, and by this means they were made sad. God has many ways to afflict the wicked. "Even in laughter, says Solomon, the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness." How kind and affectionate was the inquiry of Joseph. Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day? What is the matter? Tell me your sorrows, and I will pity you, sympathize with you, and endeavor to comfort your hearts and then your minds. This kind, affectionate and sympathizing disposition must have made Joseph greatly beloved by all who were in the prison. Joseph was their keeper, and how mild and kind did he behave to them. We ought to concern ourselves with the troubles of others: we should

should inquire the reason of their sorrows. How delightful it is to see children kind to each other, to hear them tenderly, inquire the reason why their brother or their sister is in tears. You may often be able to give those who weep some comfort, by kindly asking the reason of their grief. When a poor boy has reason to weep, because he has no friend in the world; he has no father, no mother, no brother, no sister near to comfort him; go then to that poor weeping orphan and try to comfort him. Think how you should like others to speak to you, if you were in his place, and go and speak in the same manner to him. Joseph foretold the deliverance and restoration of the chief Butler, but he did not foresee his own. So we may sometimes be able to give that comfort to others which we ourselves may stand in need of at a future time. Joseph gave all the glory of his knowledge and wisdom to God, by saying that interpretations belonged to him. So should you, my dear children, give God thanks for all the knowledge and instruction which you obtain at school, at home, or at the house of God. See how Joseph spoke concerning the cruel

manner

manner in which his brethren treated him. Imitate him always; think the best, and speak as favourably of the unkindness you receive from your brethren and your schoolfellows. See what great change may happen in a short time. In three days you cannot tell what may happen to you. We know not what a day may bring forth. Never forget the kindness that you receive from others. Do not be ungrateful or unkind. Remember your friends and instructors.

A HYMN.

FATHER of mercies, send thy grace
All powerful from above,
To form, in our obedient souls,
The image of thy love.

O may our sympathising hearts
That generous pleasure know,
Kindly to share in others joy,
And weep for others woe.

When the most helpless sons of grief
Low in distress are laid;
Soft be our hearts, their pains to feel,
And swift our hands to aid.

[Kindly, like Joseph, ask to know
Why tears and sorrows rise?
And when the reason is explain'd,
Then comfort and advise.]

So Jesus look'd on dying man,
When thron'd above the skies;
And 'midst 'th' embraces of his God,
He felt compassion rise.

On wings of love the Saviour flew,
To raise us from the ground,
And shed the richest of his blood,
A balm for every wound.

LECTURE XLII.

PHARAOH'S DREAMS, AND JOSEPH'S INTERPRETATION.

GEN. 41. 15. 16.—*And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream, to interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, it is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.*

AFTER two full years were passed away, Pharaoh had a double dream, which by its being repeated was more deeply impressed upon his mind. "And it came to pass in the morning, that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and the wise men thereof; and Pharaoh told them his dreams; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh."

The Butler heard that the mind of his royal master was much disturbed by these remarkable

remarkable dreams, which all the wise men of the kingdom were unable to explain. The chief Butler instantly recollected the remarkable dream which he had in the prison, and the exact interpretation of it, which had been given by Joseph. At the same time he remembered Joseph's request, and his own ingratitude and neglect. He therefore thought that it was now a good opportunity for him to recommend Joseph to the notice of Pharaoh, and at the same time raise himself in the favor of his royal master.

Hear the account which he gives of Joseph. "Then spake the chief Butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day. Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief Baker: And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man, according to the interpretation of the dream. And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream did he interpret.

And

And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged."—As soon as Pharaoh heard this, he immediately sent for Joseph in great haste. "Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh." What Pharaoh said to Joseph, and the modest and prudent answer which Joseph gave, you have already heard. I shall therefore proceed to relate.

I. PHARAOH'S DREAMS.—"And Pharaoh said unto Joseph: In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river; and, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fat-fleshed and well favored, and they fed in a meadow: And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favored, and lean-fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness: And the lean and the ill favored kine did eat up the first seven fat kine: And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favored

favored as at the beginning. So I awoke.

"And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good: And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them: And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it unto me."

These were the dreams of Pharaoh, and very strange ones indeed they were. No wonder he was so much disturbed about them. Pharaoh had paid Joseph a very high compliment when he first entered into his presence. I have dreamed a dream, said Pharaoh, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard that thou canst understand dreams and give the true interpretation of them. Some young men would have felt themselves a few inches taller, and would have thought themseves wiser and more knowing than all the venerable grey beards that were to be found in Egypt. Some would have been puffed up with pride, but Joseph is the same man in the palace as he was in the prison.

It

It is not in me, said Joseph; God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace. Here we see the humility of Joseph, and at the time a noble concern for the glory of the true God: That infinite, holy, and powerful Being, before whom all the idols of Egypt would fall to the ground.

Pharaoh dreamed he stood upon the banks of the river Nile, by which the land of Egypt is watered; that he saw fourteen cows or kine, come up out of the river, seven fat ones and seven lean ones; that the lean ones devoured the fat ones, and yet looked as lean as before. That he saw seven ears of corn growing upon one stalk, which were devoured by seven thin and withered ears that were blasted with the east wind. In saying that God would give Pharaoh an answer of PEACE, he removed all fears from the king's mind as to an unfavourable interpretation.

II. JOSEPH'S INTERPRETATION.

"And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one; God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good kine are seven years, and the seven good

good ears are seven years; the dream is one. And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them, are seven years; and the seven empty years blasted with the east wind, shall be seven years of famine. This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do, he sheweth unto Pharaoh. Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt. And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine shall consume the land: And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass." Under two different emblems or representations, by the appearance of seven fat and seven lean kine, and by the appearance of seven full ears, and seven thin ears, the king had been warned in his sleep, that seven years of great plenty, would be succeeded by seven years of great scarcity. The fat cattle and

and the full ears of corn, were emblems or representations of plenty, and the lean kine and blasted ears were emblems of famine. The kine seems to refer to grass, by which cattle is fed, and the ears of corn to bread, which is the staff of life. The dream was repeated in order to shew not only the certainty, but the near approach of the events foretold in it.

How humble, how dignified, is the conduct of Joseph. With pious and Christian courage does he mention the true God, in the presence of the monarch and all his courtiers and wise men. He stood surrounded by some of the highest in rank, and the most remarkable for wisdom. Their eyes were fixed on Joseph, they were all attentive to his words. They hear him declare, that God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace: that God had shewed Pharoah, what he is about to do. What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh. The thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. What courage and piety, what wisdom and humility were displayed by Joseph, when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

III. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. How long was it after the Butler was restored to his office, that Pharaoh had these two remarkable dreams? "It came to pass after two full years."

2. What were the dreams of Pharaoh about? "Seven fat and seven lean kine, seven full and good ears of corn, and seven thin ears blasted with the east wind."

3. To what did these two things refer, what did they mean? The things which in Egypt were more remarkable, cattle and corn.

4. What was there remarkable in these dreams? The cattle or kine devouring each other, and the ears of corn devouring each other.

5. What did the Butler say, when he remembered Joseph to the king? "I remember my faults this day."

6. What did Pharaoh say to Joseph? "I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it."

7. What answer did Joseph make? "It is not in me, God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace?"

8.

8. What did Pharaoh say concerning the magicians or wise men of Egypt? "That there was none that could declare the meaning of his dreams."

9. Who interpreted Pharaoh's dreams? Joseph.

10. What did Joseph say concerning God? "That he had shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do, because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass."

IV. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Those that put their trust in God, shall never be disappointed; but those that put their trust in Man, will find as Joseph did, that they often forget to perform the promises they have made. Many children remember what they ought to forget, and forget what they ought to remember. Joseph waited two years, his patience is displayed in waiting as well as in suffering. It is a good thing when children remember their faults, when they remember them with real sorrow, and desire to repent of them and implore forgiveness of them. God will make you to remember the sins of your youth.

youth. Repentance includes confession of sin, a hatred of sin, and a turning from sin unto God. There must be real sorrow for sin, before we can hate it, or confess it, or turn from it. Let every one now think of their faults, let them try to remember how many sins they have committed against God. Let them remember what those faults are of which they are most guilty. What those sins are which they most frequently commit. What are their most easily besetting sins. Pray to God, and on your knees with tears implore the pardon of God, through Jesus Christ. God can and will pardon you, if you ask it for the sake of Christ.

Imitate the humility of Joseph, and give the praise and glory of all that you know to God. Let all know that you are a Christian, that you are not an unbeliever. Never be ashamed of your religion. Never be ashamed of Jesus. Ashamed of Jesus!

"Ashamed of Jesus, yes, you may,
"When you 've no guilt to wash away,
"No tears to wipe, no good to crave,
"No fears to quell, no soul to save."

Gregg.

The

The Lord will bring to nought the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the prudent. He will give wisdom to those who are despised, that the glory may be given to God alone. See what changes may take place in a short time. What a change in Joseph's condition! What a change both for the better and the worse was to take place in Egypt. Learn, my young friends, how to want, and how to abound. Magistrates are called shepherds, whose care it must be not only to rule, but to feed. Many are the blessings which God will give to those who fear him. Seek wisdom from him who is the fountain of wisdom. Amen.

A HYMN.

A HYMN.

Persevering Grace.

TO God the only wise,
Our Saviour and our King,
Let all the saints below the skies
Their humble praises bring.

'Tis his almighty love,
His counsel, and his care,
Preserves us safe from sin and death,
And ev'ry hurtful snare.

He will present our souls
Unblemish'd and complete,
Before the glory of his face,
With joys divinely great.

Then all the chosen seed
Shall meet around the throne,
Shall bless the conduct of his grace,
And make his wonders known.

To our Redeemer God
Wisdom and pow'r belongs
Immortal crowns of majesty,
And everlasting songs. *Watts.*

LECTURE

LECTURE XLIII.

JOSEPH MADE GOVERNOR OF EGYPT.

GEN. 41. 40. *Thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.*

SOLOMON was a wise man, His words are words of truth, "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings: he shall not stand before mean men." Joseph was a man diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. He was kind, he was humble, he was prudent, he was faithful to them whom he served, both to Potiphar and the keeper of the prison; he was kind and faithful to the Butler and the Baker, he was faithful to the king of Egypt. He gave a natural and simple explanation of Pharaoh's dreams. All who heard his interpretation must have been convinced of its truth. After having interpreted Pharoah's dreams, he adds a few words of advice and counsel to the king. Let us therefore,

I.

I. Hear the ADVICE which JOSEPH gave to PHARAOH.

"Now, therefore, let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in those cities. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine."

This advice was good, It was just such counsel as Pharaoh's wise men ought to have given him. They were not wise enough to explain the dream; how then could they be expected to have prudence enough to improve it. No doubt they approved, and every one was wondering who the king would appoint as corn factor general, each one wishing that he might be chosen for the new office. He advised Pharaoh to appoint officers who were

to

to make it their business to buy up all the spare corn, and there was to be a chief Officer or Governor over the whole. If Joseph had not advised this, it is very likely that it would not have been done. The fifth part of the land was to be cultivated during the years of plenty, and all the corn that was not consumed or eaten was to be laid in the king's granaries or store houses. There is no reason to think that Joseph said this to recommend himself. He had the good of the country at heart. He was a public spirited man, and a true patriot.

II. PHARAOH'S APPEAL and DETERMINATION. He was struck with the wisdom and humility of Joseph, and immediately formed the resolution of being guided by his counsels, he saw that the advice was good. As Joseph had recommended a wise man, Pharoah appealed to those who were present, whether there was any other person so fit for this office as himself. He determined that the very man, who (being divinely inspired) gave this advice, should carry it into execution.

"And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants,

Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled, only in the throne will I be greater than thou."

Joseph had not mentioned the name of the true God in vain. Pharaoh was convinced that all the gods of Egypt were not able to bestow such wisdom as that which Joseph displayed. A few hours before Joseph was a prisoner, now he is raised to the dignity of being the second in office and authority in all the land of Egypt: only in the throne (says Pharaoh) will I be greater than thou. Pharaoh's wise men knew that they had not the spirit of God. They thought they could manage the business very well without having the spirit of God.

III. JOSEPH made GOVERNOR of EGYPT.—"And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, see I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand and put

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it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; and he made him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; * and he gave him to wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On. And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt."

Such were the honours and dignities to which Joseph was advanced by Pharaoh at the age of thirty years. He not only employed him to buy up corn, but made him prime minister or state comptroller of the household, chief justice of the kingdom, according to his word the nation was to be ruled or judged. Some think he was also commander in chief. If so, he must have learned something of a military life, while he was with the captain of the

* This means a Revealer of Secrets.

the guard. This commission was very extensive, all the affairs of the kingdom of Egypt must pass through his hands. The Egyptians at that time were the first nation on earth for learning, power, and glory.

Pharaoh gave Joseph his own ring, and took it off his own finger, and put it on Joseph's finger. This was a mark of great favor. It was like giving him the great Seal of Egypt. He gave him the fine linen of Egypt, instead of his steward's dress or his prison garments. He put on him a gold chain. Joseph when he was first put in prison, wore chains of iron, now he wears a chain of gold. Joseph's wisdom and piety were much greater and more valuable ornaments than the chain of gold or Pharaoh's own ring.

He made him ride in the second chariot; that is, Joseph's carriage always went next to that of the king. First, the royal carriage, and then Joseph's chariot, and they cried before him, Bow the knee, or as it may be read, the father of the king, master in wisdom, tender in years, as if it had been said, though a youth in age he is a father in character. Joseph

said

said that God had made him a father to Pharaoh. (Gen. 45. 8.) He gave him a new name, which shewed not only Pharaoh's authority over Joseph, but at the same time expressed the high esteem he had for him. His new name signifies A REVEALER OF SECRETS.—These honors were conferred in the most solemn manner in the presence of all the Court, "I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."

The last mark of Pharaoh's favor that Joseph received, was the Princess Asenath, the daughter of a Prince, to be his wife. There is every reason to believe, that by his means his wife, and probably her whole family, became worshippers of the true God, of that God who had given Joseph all this wisdom and honour.

IV. JOSEPH'S PERFORMANCE of the DUTIES of his OFFICE.

"And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went over all the land of Egypt. And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid

up the food in the cities: the food of the field which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering, for it was without number."—Joseph paid no visits to the jailor or the captain of the guard. He was not proud of his new dignities, he had great grace given him as well as wisdom. Joseph was faithful to the trust reposed in him by the king. Joseph immediately became a traveller. He took a general survey of the country: directed what parts were to be cultivated and sown with corn; where the granaries and public stores were to be erected; set persons to work. He gathered or bought up the corn with the king's money. Perhaps it was commanded by public proclamation that the fifth part of the land was to be sown with corn. Joseph bought up all that was to be sold while the corn was cheap. Some think that the corn was not threshed, but stacked, so that the straw might be food for the cattle and the corn for man. How many large stacks of corn there must have been in the vicinity of every city.

V. JOSEPH'S CHILDREN.

"And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came; which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On, bare unto him." Some think that Joseph's wife was an orphan. That her father was dead, and that Pharaoh had the charge of her. He was guardian to this princess. Joseph called the name of his first born Manasseh.* For "God," said he, "hath made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." All the unkindness he had received from his brethren was now forgotten. And the name of the second he called Ephraim.† For "God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." It had been the land of his affliction, and it was still the land of his affliction. He was still at a distance from his father's house. Fruitfulness and forgetfulness are often seen in the same family.

VI. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What advice did Joseph give to Pharaoh? "That he should appoint a wise and discreet

* Forgetfulness.

† Fruitfulness.

discreet man, with officers under him, to buy up all the spare corn in the years of plenty."

2. Who did Pharaoh appoint to this office? Joseph.

3. What other employments and honors did Pharaoh give Joseph? "He made him ruler over his house and all the land of Egypt. He gave him his own ring, clothed him in fine linen, put a chain of gold round his neck, and made him ride in the second chariot."

4. What is the meaning of Joseph's new name? A revealer of secrets.

5. How old was Joseph when he stood before Pharaoh? Thirty years.

6. Where did Joseph go when he went out from the presence of Pharaoh? "He went over all the land of Egypt."

7. What is the meaning of the name which Joseph gave to his eldest son? Manasseh means "forgetfulness."

8. What is the meaning of the name which Joseph gave to his youngest son? Ephraim means "fruitfulness."

VII. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

Joseph not only interpreted Pharaoh's dream,

dream, but gave him good counsel. We ought to listen to the advice of strangers as well as friends. None so wise but what they may be made wiser. We may learn what is good even from our enemies. What a good thing it would be for the kingdoms of the world, if every king had such a counsellor as Joseph. In him we behold a bright example of fidelity, activity, and equity. We see here what extensive good may be done by one man. Seek, then, my dear children, Joseph's God. Pray that he would give you grace and wisdom, and make you useful in the world. The knowledge of future temporal events might sometimes be useful, but it is much better for us to know what our future state will be in the world to come. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. Let us not forget God in our prosperity. Before honor is humility.

A HYMN.

The Character of Joseph.

HOW many changes Joseph pass'd,
Before he thirty years had known!
He's now a slave, in prison cast,
And now exalted next the Throne.

Yet grace appears in every scene,
And gilds the various paths he trod,
How wise, how just, how kind to man,
How fearful of offending God!

In deep adversity depress'd,
He's cheerful, active, and resign'd,
And when with wealth and honor bless'd,
Humility adorns his mind.

From his example may we learn,
Our various duties to fulfil,
And make it our supreme concern,
To please the Lord, and do his will. R. M.

LECTURE

LECTURE XLIV.

THE FIRST JOURNEY OF JOSEPH'S BRETHREN TO EGYPT.

GEN. 42. 3. *And Joseph's ten Brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.*

YOU have heard what Joseph did during the years of plenty. How he was employed in building store houses for the corn which he bought up. These years were ended, and the seven years of famine come. "And the dearth or famine was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread." The private stores of the people were soon consumed, and they went to the king and cried for bread. Pharaoh told them to go to Joseph. He opened all the store houses and sold corn to the people, at a just and reasonable price. Thus he preserved them from being oppressed by the high price of corn, and from perishing for want. The public granaries were not opened till all the private stores were consumed. This gave him great influence, both with the princes, whose treasury he enriched, and the people

whose wants he supplied. Jacob heard by report that there was corn in Egypt, and was assured of the truth of this report, by those who had purchased supplies of corn in Egypt. It was now the second year of the famine, and they were probably reduced to great distress, and knew not what to do. Jacob said unto his sons, "Why look ye one upon another. Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt, get you down thither and buy for us from thence, that we may live and not die."

1. THE JOURNEY OF JOSEPH'S BRETHREN TO EGYPT. And Joseph's ten Brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. They are not called Jacob's sons, but Joseph's Brethren, because it is Joseph's history, that is here related. They went themselves, they did not send their servants. They could lay out their own money much better, than any servant they had. Benjamin was not permitted to accompany them, lest he should come into any danger. He was his father's darling, he was Joseph's brother. A number of other persons accompanied them on the same business. "And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came, for the famine

mine was in the land of Canaan." As they had a large quantity of corn to buy, they were brought before Joseph. No doubt he expected that they would come, some of them at least, if not all of them. "And Joseph's brethren came and bowed down themselves before him, with their faces to the earth." This was the custom in Egypt, as well as in India, that they should bend their bodies, and make obeisance to him. Now it was that their empty sheaves did obeisance to his full one. Now Joseph's dreams are partly accomplished. Joseph saw his brethren and knew them. He had parted with them when he was seventeen years of age, he was now about thirty-eight or thirty-nine years of age, two and twenty years had made a greater alteration in him than it had done in them, therefore they knew him not. All foreigners that were in any way remarkable were brought before him, in order to prevent any abuse of the privilege of purchasing corn, to prevent their coming for any bad purposes. He inquired from whence they came, and what was their real design. He made himself strange, and spoke roughly unto them, and accused them of being spies: and that they came

came to see the nakedness of the land. All this was done that his dreams might be accomplished, that he might bring them to repentance, and that he might learn the true state of his family. For they told him that they were brethren, the sons of one man, that they were formerly twelve in number, ten of whom were come to buy corn. The youngest at home with their father, and one is not.

II. JOSEPH'S BRETHREN put in PRISON.

"And he put them altogether into ward three days." This he did to frighten them, to lead them to think of their conduct to him. Not seeing Benjamin with them, he began to fear that they had done some mischief to him. Considering the roughness of Joseph's manner, the authority which he possessed, and the crime of which he accused them, they most likely expected nothing but death. He desired them to send one of their number to fetch their youngest brother, that he might know whether they told the truth. They did not seem willing to comply with this request. Perhaps they could not agree who should be the messenger, therefore he put them all into

confinement

confinement, till they submitted to his will and came to a determination among themselves. What do you think were their thoughts while they were in confinement? They were innocent of the crime of which they were accused, but then they had been guilty of so many others, that they had reason to fear that the vengeance of God would one day overtake them.

III. Their DELIVERANCE from PRISON.

"And Joseph said unto them the third day, this do and live; for I fear God: If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye and carry corn for the famine of your houses: But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so." They agreed to this proposal; finding it was in vain to resist. They knew no other way of preventing their families from perishing with hunger. "For I fear God." How surprized they must have been to hear these words from the mouth of the Governor of Egypt. If he really does fear God, then he will do us no harm. He will not starve our families,

lies, nor take away our lives unjustly and without cause. These words must at once encourage and impress their minds. He wanted them to think how much better treatment they had received at his hands, than they had shown to their brother who had pleaded for his life, but they would not hear him. That he may have some surety for their return, he insists on one of them being detained in prison, till they prove themselves to be true men, by bringing their brother.

IV. The sorrowful REFLECTION of JOSEPH'S BRETHREN upon this EVENT.

When Joseph had told them what they were to do, he probably retired from them, and as he spoke to them by an interpreter, they little thought that the Governor of Egypt understood their language. What must have been Joseph's feeling when he heard them saying one to another, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he sought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben spake unto them, saying, spake I not unto you do not sin against the child; and

ye would not hear: therefore, behold also, his blood is required? And they knew not that Joseph understood them." Joseph having mentioned the fear of God, set them a thinking: their conscience which had slept for more than twenty years, was now awakened, and Joseph had brought them to that state of mind which he wished to see them in. Reuben remembers his efforts to save his brother, and is comforted, while they are tormented with the stings of a guilty conscience. What they said had such an effect on Joseph's mind, that he turned himself about from them and wept, and returned to them again and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

V. JOSEPH'S BRETHREN dismissed with CORN and MONEY.

After binding Simeon and detaining him as a hostage or surety for their return, he ordered their sacks to be filled with corn and their money to be returned; this was done at the command of Joseph. "Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and

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to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them. And they laded their asses with the corn and departed thence. And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth." The money was not given into their hands, but put in the sack, tied up in a bundle, just as they had delivered it. This must be a new source of fear and sorrow to them. "And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their hearts failed them, and they said one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us." This was done by Joseph in kindness to them: but he knew that they would be alarmed by it, that they would think it a snare to entrap them and accuse them of carrying away the money either by force or fraud. They do not reproach the Governor or his officers, but ascribe it to the righteous judgment of God.

VI. The ARRIVAL of JOSEPH'S BRETHREN at HOME.

"And they came unto Jacob their father in the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto

unto them." That the Governor of the country had spoken roughly to them, and had taken them for spies, that he had bound Simeon and detained him in prison till they brought Benjamin, to prove that they had spoken the truth. They then emptied their sacks of the corn, and behold every man's bundle of money was in his sack. It seems they did not mention this circumstance to their father, fearing perhaps that he would reprove them for not going back to Egypt immediately as soon as they had found the money. And when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. This seems to have made a deep impression on their father's mind, who began to suspect that all was not right. "And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children. Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me. And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, slay my two sons, if I bring him not unto thee: Deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. And he said, my son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone; if mischief befal him by the way

in which ye go, then will ye bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

VII. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What did Jacob see? That there was corn in Egypt.

2. How many of Joseph's brethren went to Egypt? Ten.

3. Who was it that staid at home? Benjamin, the youngest child.

4. When Joseph saw his brethren, in what manner did he receive them? He spoke roughly unto them.

5. What crime did he accuse them of? That they were spies of the country.

6. How long were they in prison? Three days.

7. When they were delivered from prison and heard Joseph say that he feared God, what did they say one to another? "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us; and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us."

8. What effect had their words on Joseph? "He turned himself from them and wept."

9. Who did he bind before their eyes? Simeon.

10. What command did he give concerning them? To fill their sacks with corn and restore every man's money in his sack.

11. When they found their money in the sacks, what effect had it on their minds? Their hearts failed them, and they were afraid.

12. What did they say to each other? "What is this that God hath done unto us."

VIII. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

See what a terrible thing experience of famine is.—How many people have died for want of bread in England. How many have died for want of rice in India. It is bad to be without bread, worse not to know where to obtain it; but it is worse than all when you have no money to buy bread when you are hungry. When in distress we must not stand looking at each other, but use means for our relief: if in danger, let us pray to God and then do what we can to help ourselves. It is pleasant to have company on a journey, but it is better to travel

N. B. Similar questions may be asked on the remaining part of the Chapter.

travel alone than in bad company. It is pleasant when we see all the children in a family travelling the road to heaven: seeking Christ, who is the bread of life. We must not speak too rough or severe to some children, or we shall terrify and discourage them. We must sometimes behave roughly to children when there is love and pity in the heart. A severe look is sometimes worse to a child than a reproof or even blows. It is sad to be falsely accused, and a great support to the mind to know that we are innocent of the crime laid to our charge. We hear Joseph saying, "I fear God." Do you fear God, my dear children? Are you afraid of his wrath? Do you desire his love? Do you desire to live with God? Then seek for the pardon of all your sins through Christ Jesus, his dear Son. We cannot flee from a guilty conscience. Though our consciences may sleep for a time, yet they will awake. We may be deaf to the voice of conscience, warning us against the commission of sin, but we must hear the voice of conscience, when it accuses us before the bar of God at the last day. Be sure your sin will find you out. God cannot only make your conscience

science your accuser, but your tormentor also. Bad children are sometimes put in confinement. It is the worst punishment they can suffer, to be left alone in the dark. They cannot bear the stings of a guilty conscience. It is bad to slight the warning voice of God and our friends. They would not hear what Reuben said. They must hear the voice of an accusing conscience. Let us always ascribe our distress to the right cause. When we are in trouble, let us ascribe it to God. We have reason to expect the worst from Satan, but yet we may hope in the mercy of God in Christ. We see what it is to have a guilty conscience. Wicked children sometimes break their parents' hearts and send them with sorrow to the grave.

LECTURE

LECTURE XLV.

THE SECOND JOURNEY OF JOSEPH'S BRETHREN TO EGYPT.

GEN. 43. 15. *And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.*

THE corn which Joseph's brethren brought home, was soon eaten up, and their father requested them to go down to Egypt and buy more. "Go again, and buy us a little food." Not much, we must be content with a little. Judah then spoke, and told his father, that they dare not appear in the presence of the governor of Egypt, without Benjamin, and if he would not consent to Benjamin's going with them, they dare not, they could not run the risk and hazard of their lives, by going without him. Why, said Israel, dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother. Judah replied that they examined them so closely, and put such questions

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to them that they could not avoid it. Is your father yet alive? Have ye another brother? And we told him the truth, without knowing that he would say, bring your brother down.

Judah offers to become surety for Benjamin, saying, send the lad with me, and we will arise and go. I will be surety for him, of my hands shalt thou require him: If I bring him not unto thee, then let me bear the blame for ever. In addition to this he adds, that the lives of their children, their father, and themselves, depended on his agreeing to this demand of the governor of Egypt. At the same time he says, that except they had lingered, they would by this time have been to Egypt, and back again. The good old man at last consents and desires them to take a present with them, of the best fruits of the land, a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds. "And take double money in your hand, and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand, peradventure it was an oversight. Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man." Then he concludes all with a solemn and fervent

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vent prayer to God for his blessing. "And God Almighty give you mercy before the man that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." The fruits of Canaan would be a token of respect, the double money might be necessary, because the corn might cost more than before, and the restoration of the money that was found in their sacks would bear evidence of their sincerity, honesty and good intentions.

I. We shall notice the ORDERS which JOSEPH gave concerning his BRETHREN.

"And when JOSEPH saw Benjamin with them, he said unto the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house." Such an honor as this they did not expect. It was an honor which they did not desire. Joseph was busily employed in selling the corn and receiving money. He did not leave his business to others. He did it himself, and thus he saw that people had their full measure of

corn

corn for the money which they paid. By this means Joseph's mind, which no doubt had been greatly affected at the sight of Benjamin, would be more composed. He would be able also to think in his own mind how he should act and what he should do. These orders the steward obeyed, and conducted the brethren of Joseph from his corn office to his private habitation where he dwelt, where he was not engaged in business. Perhaps they wondered where the man was going to take them, and probably expected to be conducted to prison. "And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks are we brought in, that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses." A guilty conscience will not let them rest. Joseph had so strongly suspected them of being spies, that now they had brought Benjamin, they expected to be detained on another account. They expected that he would call them to account for the money which they found in their sacks, that he would accuse them of being cheats and of robbing the treasury. That they

they had taken the advantage of the hurry and bustle of the market, and had carried off their corn unpaid for. The wicked are fearful, they are unbelieving, every thing appears in the worst light. They think that Joseph would make slaves of them and keep them in bondage for life. This was what they had done to Joseph, and now they expected that the same thing would befal them as a punishment from God.

II. The CONVERSATION of Joseph's BRETHREN with the STEWARD.

"And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house, and said, Oh, Sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food. And it came to pass when we came to the inn, that we opened our sack, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. And other money have we brought down in our hand to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks." This was wise and prudent in them to mention this circumstance

stance to the steward, because if they were afterwards examined concerning this matter, they could appeal to this conversation with the steward. He could say that they had mentioned the business to him and returned the money in full weight, thinking it was an oversight. The answer which the steward made must have greatly surprized them. "And he said, peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them." Thus they were convinced that the governor was satisfied of the truth of what they had said. This was a token for good, that all is well. What a kind, wise and pious answer this was. How suitable was this answer to them at this time. They had said, what is this that God hath done unto us? The steward says, that their God and the God of their father had given them treasure in their sacks. He directs them; look to God, and thank him for this kindness. He knew most likely that the money was returned by Joseph's orders, and at the same time, knowing the character of his master, he could not think that he had any ill design in so

doing.

doing, He surely will not hurt these men for that which had been done by his command. This steward appears to know something of the true God, of Joseph's God, of their God, of the God of Jacob. Servants may get more knowledge of religion in families where the true God is worshipped, feared and loved than the heads of such families are aware of. The steward encourages them by bringing to them Simeon their brother. Simeon had been released by Joseph's orders, privately given. He gave them water to wash their feet and provender for their asses and told them moreover that they were to dine with Joseph. So the y prepared themselves, and the present which they had brought against Joseph came at noon.

III. Joseph's KIND ENQUIRIES and ENTERTAINMENT of his BRETHREN.

"And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hands into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth. And he asked them of their welfare and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake, is he yet alive? And they answered,

answered, thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads and made obeisance." Now were the dreams of Joseph completely fulfilled. They had bowed to him twice, and when they spoke of their father, they bowed again. As if Jacob their father was present; they bowed for him. How great was the respect they shew him. How kind were his inquiries concerning their family. Little did they think it was their brother Joseph who made these kind inquiries after their welfare. He then lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, "God be gracious unto thee, my son." This was all he could say. His countenance and feelings had nearly betrayed him. "And Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn over his brother, and he sought where to weep, and he entered into his chamber and wept there." The inquiries which he made concerning his father were introduced by the present, which they brought, and which they no doubt presented in the name of Jacob. The tenderness of Joseph, his firmness of opinion and the entire controul which he had over his feelings

shew

shew that he was indeed a man of superior character. And he washed his face and refrained himself, and went out and said, "Set on bread. And they set on for him, by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves." The order of the tables must appear very remarkable to his brethren. They could easily tell why the Egyptians would not eat at the same table with them, the custom forbade their eating together. They could not easily account for Joseph having a table to himself and dining alone, unless it was his rank. His brethren were placed according to their ages, which Joseph knew, and placed them in that order. Well might they be surprized and marvel one at another. He sent messes to them from his own table, and Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's. Not that Benjamin ate more than the rest, but this was the manner of shewing special favor in those days in Egypt. "And they drank and were merry with him."

IV. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. Who was it that pleaded the necessity

of

of Benjamin's going with them to Egypt? Judah.

2. What did the present consist of which Jacob sent to Joseph? A little balm, a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds.

3. What was the prayer which Jacob offered up when he sent them away? "And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin."

4. When Joseph saw his brethren, what orders did he give to the ruler of his house? "Bring these men home, and slay and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon."

5. When they spoke to Joseph's steward concerning the money they found in their sacks, what answer did he make to them? "Peace be to you, fear not: your God and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks."

6. What inquiries did Joseph make concerning his father? "Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive."

7. What did he say to Benjamin? "God be gracious to thee, my son."

8. How did his brethren feel while they were at dinner? "And they drank, and were merry with him."

V. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

There are some persons who, when they have eaten one meal, know not where they shall get another. You may be blamed for telling the truth, but you must speak the truth always. Jacob blamed his children for telling the truth. Many wicked parents do this. Why did you tell these things; could you not have told a different story. When we make promises, we must perform them. Therefore never make a promise which you cannot keep. It is better not to promise than to break our promises. Delays are dangerous. A man's gift maketh room for him. Let us always accompany our gifts with our prayers that God would bless the gift, the giver, and the receiver. When a person gives you more than you ought to have, give it back. When you go to the shop for change, count it and see that you have it right, not too much, nor too little. When you receive too much, return it, it was an oversight; it was a mistake. Then peo-

ple

ple will know that you are honest, and that they can trust you. It is good to see great men hospitable and generous. It is good to see children kind. Rich children should be kind to poor children. When in distress about any thing, we should ask advice, especially of those who are able to help us and to give good counsel. Encourage those that are fearful. Look to God. You must always behave with respect to those who are your superiors. Enquire kindly after the welfare of others, especially of aged friends. Let all young persons pray that God would be gracious to them. Children must not be displeased if they do not sit at the same table with their parents, especially when they have company and there is no room for them. Every child should sit in their own place according to their ages. Then there will be no quarreling about places. We have sometimes reason to wonder at others conduct, but we ought to wonder most at our own. It is the greatest wonder of all that we sinful creatures are out of Hell; when we have deserved to be doomed to that place long ago: Let no child wish for Benjamin's mess. He had four times

more than, would do him good. It is not love to help children to more than they can eat. Children must not wish to taste of every dish at the table. It is not proper that children should have what they please; nor yet as much as they can eat.

LECTURE XLVI.

THE CUP FOUND IN BENJAMIN'S SACK.

GEN. 44. 12. *And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.*

JOSEPH's Brethren seemed to have been very happy the last time we took leave of them. Their fears and their troubles seem to be all forgotten. They were dining with the governor of all the land of Egypt, and they drank and were merry with him. A merry evening sometimes brings a sorrowful morning. Joseph commanded his steward to fill every man's sack with food as much as they could carry, and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth, and "put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn-money." This was done that he might have a reason for detaining them, and trying their love to Benjamin. Joseph's orders were obeyed. As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away and their asses. Little did they think how soon they were to return to Joseph's house.

We may suppose that they were all very happy and that they began to talk of the Governor's kindness to them. What a charming man. How kindly did he inquire after our aged parent. I am glad Benjamin went with us. What a good wish was that which he uttered when he laid his hand on Benjamin's head. He seemed to take a great fancy to him. We shall have wonderful things to tell our father when we get home. How glad he will be to see us all. My father will be very glad to see me back again, I know, says Simeon, I dare say he expected I should never get out of jail. The governor was very kind to me after you were gone. He did not let me want for any thing. I am glad that I was able to prevail on my Father (says Judah), I shall now have the pleasure of presenting him safe and well to him again. It appears rather strange, (says Reuben,) that the governor should know all our ages, and that we should be placed before him in the order of our birth. Happy Benjamin, you are the governor's favourite. Did you see how much food he sent to you to what he did to the rest of us. Thus they were anticipating the pleasure of easing the mind of their father

father, from all anxiety and fear. Simeon restored, Benjamin safe, asses laden. All in good health, fearing no evil, with a light heart and cheerful countenance they journey on to the land of Canaan, to the peaceful abode of their aged parent.

I. JOSEPH'S BRETHREN PURSUED AND SEARCHED.

"And when they were gone out of the city and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is not this it in which my Lord drinketh, and Whereby indeed he divineth? Ye have done evil in so doing. And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words." How astonished and surprized they must be to hear this charge. The cup had probably been used the day before, and the steward suggested that it was left at their table, in a careless manner, to try their honesty. He charges them with ingratitude, in rewarding evil for good, and with folly in taking a cup, that was used every day, and which would

soon be missed, diligent search being made. He also intimated that Joseph knew who had stolen the cup. Joseph no doubt expected that his brethren would deny the charge and say that they were innocent of the crime. Hear their reply. "And they said unto him, wherefore saith my Lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing! Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy Lord's house silver or gold? With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my Lord's bondmen." So sure were they of their innocence that they make the assertion with the greatest confidence —This was wrong, because when they were returning the first time, they found every man his money in his sack's mouth. If they had been accused of carrying away their money, they would have declared that they were innocent; they knew not who put their money in their sacks, and how could they know but that the same person had put

the

the cup into one of their sacks. They said as a proof of their honesty, they had brought the money back again. How then could it be thought that they had stolen the silver cup? They pronounced their own sentence of condemnation. Therefore the steward replied, "Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found, shall be my servant, and ye shall be blameless." This was a lighter punishment than they had pronounced on themselves; they immediately began the search. "Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack." Ten are found not guilty and acquitted. Ten sacks were searched and no cup found. Surely they must now be sure of their innocence. They could hardly think that the cup would be found in his sack to whom the Governor had showed such a public mark of favor, when, behold, Benjamin's sack being opened, there the silver cup was found. Who could have put it there? Somebody must. They do not reproach Benjamin. They can-

not believe him guilty of such base ingratitude. They do not believe that he stole the cup; yet what can they say? The stolen property is found in his possession. This is proof positive in the eye of the Law. Especially when the person cannot give any account how he came by such property, and he cannot prove it to be his own. They rend their clothes in agony, and with grief they lade their asses and return to the city. "And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house, for he was yet there, and they fell before him on the ground." Now indeed has Joseph the complete dominion over all his brethren, and that by their own consent. But he was too upright and good to take the advantage of words spoken in haste. "And Joseph said unto them, what deed is this that thou hast done? Wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine." As if he had said, did you not think that I should search and examine this matter and punish the guilty according to the laws of the land. "And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? What shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants; Behold

hold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found. And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; as for you, get you up in peace unto your father."

II. JUDAH'S INTERCESSION for BENJAMIN.

"Then Judah came near unto him and said, Oh, my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, have ye a father or a brother? And we said unto my lord, we have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, the lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face

no more. And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again and buy us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face except our youngest brother be with us. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: And the one went out from me; and I said, surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befal him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us, (seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life,) it shall come to pass when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father to the grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad, a bondman unto

unto my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren, for how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father."

Judah had been entrusted with Benjamin, perhaps he was more affectionate than the rest. He thought it his duty to offer to remain a slave instead of Benjamin, and therefore he comes forward and speaks for his brother. He pleads in Benjamin's behalf. It was indeed an arduous task to plead with a judge after he had pronounced sentence. How simple and pathetic are the words of the 20th verse. How beautiful, how tender, how kind and forcible is Judah's speech. He reminds the judge that Benjamin had been brought at his request, and that they dare not appear without him; that it was very hard for Jacob to part with him; that his father's life depended on his return; that he had become surety for him, and could not go back without him, and therefore he offered himself to remain a slave in perpetual bondage instead of Benjamin. With what feeling must Joseph listen to this

speech, especially when he knew that Benjamin was innocent, surely all will say of Judah, "Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise." We shall tell you what effect this had on Joseph's mind in the next Lecture.

III. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What orders did Joseph give to his steward? To fill their sacks with corn, as much as they could carry, and to put their money in the sack's mouth, and his silver cup in the sack of the youngest, which was Benjamin.

2. What did the steward accuse them of? Of stealing the silver cup, thereby returning evil for good.

3. Did they deny the charge and declare themselves innocent? Yes, they said, God forbid, that thy servants should do this thing.

4. What sentence did they pass on themselves? "With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die and we also will be my lord's servants."

5. What sentence did the steward pass on them? "He with whom it is found shall be my servant, and ye shall be blameless."

6.

6. With whom was the cup found? "And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

7. When they came to Joseph's house what did they do? They fell before him on the ground.

8. What did Judah say to Joseph? "What shall we say unto my lord? What shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants. Behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found."

9. What answer did Joseph make to Judah? "And he said, God forbid that I should do so; but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; as for you, get you up in peace unto your father."

10. Who interceded for Benjamin? Judah.

IV. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

When you see Joseph's brethren all travelling home together so happily, are you not reminded how happy you are sometimes when returning from school to your father's house? Some painful thought darts across your mind of something you have said or done, that makes you feel sorrowful. Take heed of re-

warding evil for good. Never be ungrateful. "Keep your hands from picking and stealing." Do not return to your parent's house laden with things not your own: you may tell them they were given you, but your own conscience accuses you; you know that they were not obtained by honest means. See what it is to be an Advocate. Whenever you plead for your brother or sister, follow Judah's example, first conciliate and endeavour to soften the anger of those before whom you plead. Beg that you may be permitted to tell your story. Ask for pity, for mercy, for pardon, engage to become surety for the good behaviour of your brother or sister for the future, especially if it is the first offence. Let your petition be humble, impressive, kind and general. Always display the most tender regard for your parents, and the most sincere affection for your brothers and sisters. If innocent, God will interpose in your behalf, in some way or other. If guilty, submit to your punishment, and pray that God would bless it for the good of your soul.

LECTURE

LECTURE XLVII.

JOSEPH MAKING HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BRETHREN.

GEN. 45. 3. 4. *And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph: doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him: for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.*

YOU have heard how Judah pleaded for Benjamin, and offered to remain a slave for life instead of him. This affecting speech and generous proposal quite overcame Joseph. He could not restrain his tears, he could not conceal his feelings any longer, he commands that all except his brethren should leave the room. He then wept so loud that the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. After he had relieved his mind by a flood of tears, he tells them

them who he is, and they no longer behold him as their judge, but as their brother. It is said that a certain painter unable to paint the agony of a father weeping over the dead body of his only child, hid his face in the garment which covered her lifeless remains. How then shall the scene which followed be described, that scene in which Joseph makes himself known to those who stood before him in silence, waiting for his answer to what Judah had said in behalf of Benjamin. His wishes are all accomplished, his brethren are humbled under a deep since of past guilt. "God hath found out the inquity of thy servants." This must refer to their cruelty to Joseph, as such he understood it. Their affection for Benjamin; unwilling to return without him. Their tender concern for their aged parent. Judah's offer to remain a bondman rather than see his father grieve or bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. All this must have made a very deep impression on Joseph's mind. And all he could say was to command all his servants to leave the room.

Then

Then comes the SECRET which he had so long concealed.

I. We shall first notice what JOSEPH said, when he MADE HIMSELF KNOWN to his BRETHREN. I AM JOSEPH!!! and thus adds, DOTH MY FATHER YET LIVE? He had put off the state of the Governor of Egypt, and the severity of a Judge. He puts on the love and affection of a brother. Tears introduce those three little words, I am Joseph. These were tears of tenderness and strong affection. He could not appear any longer strange. He now reveals his real name and character. Hitherto they had addressed him as Governor of Egypt; as *Zaphnath Paaneah*; and that they might not think it was another person of the same name, he adds "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." This would at once humble and encourage them. His name might have assisted them to recollect his voice and his features, but it was necessary to mention also their selling him into Egypt, that he might remove all doubts in their minds. What must have been their surprize and astonishment when they saw him burst into tears.

Hear

Hear what is said of them when they heard these words, I AM JOSEPH. "And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence." A discovery so unexpected, brought to their remembrance all their past guilt. What surprize! What terror! What confusion of face! What fear, what grief, what hope, what joy must have all at once been mingled together in their minds; No doubt, they started back with terror at his words. Then Joseph said unto them. come near, I pray you; and they came near. Perhaps he might call them near to him, that the Egyptians might not hear their conversation. Well might they be troubled at his presence. Well might they be silent when they had nothing to say in their own defence. Perhaps Reuben indulged the hope of being forgiven; as to Benjamin, he had nothing to fear. The rest of Joseph's brethren had every thing to fear. If Joseph had been actually dead, and had risen and appeared to them; If he had accused them and reproached them for their cruelty, they could not have been more afraid. Therefore we shall notice,

II.

II. JOSEPH'S CONVERSATION with his BRETHREN. "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life, for these two years hath the famine been in the land, and there are yet five years in which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance, so now, it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Haste ye, and go up to my father and say unto him, thus saith thy son Joseph: God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: and there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty: and behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen, and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them; and after that his brethren talked with him."

How kind was this conduct. How encouraging were his words. His design was to reprove his brethren, to make them remember their sin in such a manner as to be truly sorry for it, and to shew by their repentance that they were not disposed to repeat the crime, in acting in the same manner towards Benjamin. He now beheld their terror and confusion, and therefore that they might not sink under the weight of their guilt and despair of mercy from him, he told them to draw near and not to be afraid, that they were not to be grieved or angry with themselves, that God had sent Joseph to Egypt, and that this was done in order to preserve their lives. Though God hath brought good out of evil, yet it by no means excused their sin, and therefore it was their duty

ty to humble themselves before God and repent. This was said to comfort them and relieve the anguish of their minds. Thus they were not only led to hope and seek pardon from God, but by the kind and affectionate manner in which Joseph had embraced them all, they were assured of his forgiveness. He had given them the kiss of peace and reconciliation, and now they were able to converse with each other.

III. PHARAOH'S KINDNESS to JOSEPH'S BRETHREN. "And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come; and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, say unto thy brethren, this do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you into the land of Canaan, and take your father and your household, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat of the fat of the land. Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you waggons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father and come. Also regard not your stuffs,

for

for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours."

How kind and generous was this conduct of Pharaoh. This shews how much he loved Joseph, and what an high character he had with all ranks. Pharaoh and his servants were pleased that they had now some opportunity of shewing their gratitude to Joseph's family. Pharaoh offers them the best produce of the land, even the good of all the land of Egypt. Pharaoh's commands were obeyed, and Joseph gave them provisions for the way. "To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his father he sent after this manner, ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way, so he sent his brethren away and they departed: And he said unto them, see that ye fall not out by the way." How kind was Joseph to send such a present to his aged father. His father had sent him a present of the best fruits of the land of Canaan, and now Joseph sends him ten asses

laden

laden with the good things of Egypt. How kind to his brethren, and especially to Benjamin. How necessary was the caution which he gave them, "not to fall out by the way." Not to reproach each other with their unkindness towards him, but to forget all and forgive each other even as he had forgiven them. Joseph laid his commands upon them, and they would now think it their duty to obey one who had shewed them such kindness and affection.

IV. The REPORT they made to their FATHER on their RETURN.

"And they went up out of Egypt and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, and told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is Governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not." He thought the news too good and too wonderful to be true. "And they told him the words of Joseph which he had said unto them: and when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived." The good news he had heard was now confirmed by the arri-

val

val of the waggons. He was now revived in spirit. The days of his sorrow for Joseph were now turned into joy. No doubt he praised the Lord for this unexpected favor. "And Israel said; it is enough, Joseph my son is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die." Jacob was old, he did not expect to live long. He however resolves to go and see Joseph, that he may be refreshed with the sight of his long lost son, and then he thinks of departing in peace. He made no remark on his glory, the thoughts that he was alive and that he should have the pleasure of seeing him once again before his death, swallowed up every thing else. Jacob would think of nothing else.

V. CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

1. What did Joseph say when he made himself known to his brethren? "I am Joseph!! Doth my father yet live?"

2. How did his brethren feel when they heard these words? "And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence."

3. How did he convince them of the truth of what he said? He said "Come near to me,

I pray you. I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt."

4. What comfort did he give them? Now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

5. How did he show that he had forgiven them, and was reconciled to them? "Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him."

6. When Pharaoh heard that Joseph's brethren were come, was he glad? Yes. It pleased Pharaoh well and his servants.

7. What orders or commands did he give concerning them? That they should take wagons and return, and bring their father and their families down to Egypt, and live there.

8. What was the caution that Joseph gave to his brethren when they departed? "See that ye fall not out by the way."

VI. PRACTICAL ADDRESS.

How much pleasure do we feel when we see a relation that has been absent many years. They are sometimes so much altered that

that we hardly know them. Let us imitate Joseph's kind and forgiving conduct towards his brethren: Who is there that does not desire to be like Joseph. Is there any one of the name of Joseph present. Imitate him, try to be like him. I do not wish you to have so much pocket money as Joseph gave to Benjamin, because I fear you would not make a good use of it. Benjamin had five suits of clothes given him, I dare say he took great care of them; but there are some children who have twenty suits of clothes, and yet they do not take care of them; especially those who are at school; they do not take so much care of their clothes as they ought. You will see some children always dirty and ragged. Try to take more care of your clothes, my dear children. Joseph and Benjamin were brothers, how much they loved each other. When you have any of the good things of India, remember your aged parents, think whether they would like some of the good things. Old people cannot eat such things as they used to do when young like you. Therefore when you have any thing that you think they would like, remember them, whether it be bought

bought with money, or given you by a friend. How much need there is of Joseph's caution among young persons, whether they are of the same family, or strangers to each other. There is great need to remind them that they must not fall out by the way. Some children are too apt to be quarrelsome, this was the case with Joseph's brethren. He knew that Reuben would reprove them, as he had done once before in his hearing. One would say, It was you that first called him a dreamer. Another would say, It was you that first said, Let us kill him. It was you that stripped him of his coat of many colours. It was you that prepared to put him into the pit; and it was you that sold him to the Israelites. Jesus Christ has said, that we should love one another, that we should live in peace, because we are brethren. We have all one Father. We are the brethren of Jesus Christ. Let us not fall out. We are all guilty before God, and instead of quarrelling with each other, we ought to quarrel only with ourselves. We hope that God, whom we have all offended, will forgive us, therefore we ought to forgive each other. We are still in the way. We

are not yet arrived at our Father's house. When we have any news to relate, whether it be very good or very bad, we must often tell it with great caution. Sudden fear, joy, or sorrow sometimes produces instant death. Take care how you tell such things. Let it never be done in a thoughtless, careless manner. You may do more harm than you can do good.

LECTURE XLVIII.

JACOB'S JOURNEY TO EGYPT.

GEN. 46. 1. *And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.*

YOU heard what good old Jacob said, when you met together the last time: "I will go and see him before I die." This resolution he made haste to perform. The good old patriarch soon finished his preparations for his journey, and took with him all that he had; he did not leave any of his stuff behind, though Pharaoh had desired him to disregard it. No, it was too valuable to be left behind. You remember Jacob's vow, which he made after the remarkable dream which he had of the Ladder and the Angels. Do you recollect what he said? Perhaps not, the interesting history of Joseph has very likely made you forget. You cannot think of any thing else but Joseph. Well, I wish you may not only think of him, but study to be like him. "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying: If God will be with me and will keep me in the way which I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, then shall the Lord be my God," God answered this

this prayer, and though his uncle changed his wages ten times, yet he increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid servants and men servants, and camels and asses: these things were what Pharaoh called stuff, they were Jacob's riches. It is true the riches of Egypt were great, and of the same kind, but far inferior in Jacob's eyes; these were given him by God, and Pharaoh's gift, though it might be as large and larger, yet it would not be so valuable by any means. What God gives is much better than what man can give. You have no doubt some keepsakes at home, which I dare say you would not part with for twice their worth. Why, because they were given you by such and such a friend. You would be perhaps a little angry or vexed, if any one was to call them stuff, and ask you to throw them away. No, indeed, I will not part with them on any account whatever. God had given Jacob all this stuff. God was Jacob's best friend, and therefore he would not part with any of it, he would neither sell it nor leave it behind, but took with him all that he had.

1. Notice JACOB'S JOURNEY TO EGYPT.

"And

"And Israel took his journey with all that he had."

1. What was this all? It was his family and his substance. It was Jacob's family, and a very numerous family it was too. There was Jacob and his daughter Dinah; his eleven sons and their wives; 50 grand children and 4 great grand children; altogether made the number of his family 75, including the wives of his sons. You will indeed say that this was a large family. (There seems to be some difference between the account of Moses and that of Stephen in the Acts, 7. 14. Moses says, verse 26. and 27. That all the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides his sons' wives, were three score and six. And all the souls of the sons of Jacob which came into Egypt; i. e. first and last, including Jacob himself, Joseph and his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were three score and ten. But Stephen says, that Joseph called his father Jacob unto him, and all his kindred, three score and fifteen souls. Moses speaks of those only which descended from, him besides his sons wives, which Stephen reckons

into

into the number, which he mentions, because he speaks of his kindred in general, which includes them and makes the number right.) We have the names of his sons and their children recorded in a particular manner. What a numerous household, they promise fair to be indeed a great nation; but if we compare them with the families of Esau and Ishmael, they will appear to be but few.

2. He took with him all his substance, his cattle and his goods, which he had obtained in the land of Canaan. Let us notice,

II. JACOB'S RESTING PLACE. It was Beersheba. "And he came to Beersheba." This was a very remarkable place, it was a grove planted by Abraham, and an altar built by him; he gave this name to the place, which means the Well of the oath, because there he made an agreement and covenant with Abimelech, King of the Philistines, and there he called on the name of the everlasting God, and there the promise was renewed to Isaac his father. Towards evening he arrived at this place. Here he and his family stopped to rest themselves. It was not only a shady place to

shelter

shelter them from the Sun, but it was a place sacred to the worship of the true and living God.

2. Here he offered SACRIFICES to the God of his father Isaac. God was his God, and the God of his father also. As if he had said, Lord, though I am very desirous to go to Egypt that I may see Joseph; yet if thou shouldst forbid me as thou didst my father Issac aforetime, I will not go down, but be contented to stay where I am. These sacrifices were extraordinary, they were on this particular occasion offered to God. They were, says Mr. Henry, offered by way of thanksgiving & praise for the late happy change in his family, for the good news he had heard concerning Joseph, and the hopes he had of seeing him before he died. They were offered no doubt with humble desire for God's approbation and protection in the important journey, which he was now making, with a desire that God might be with him in the way in which he went. And perhaps they might be offered, with a desire to know if he was in the path of duty, to know whether it was the will of God that

he

he should go down to Egypt, or back to Hebron. Every thing he saw around him must fill his mind with awe and affect his heart, by the recollection of what had taken place at this favored spot. That God had formerly manifested his presence to his father Isaac. A happy place! Delightful spot! It was here that Abraham and Isaac sojourned, and here it was that Jacob chose to rest and to offer sacrifices to his father. How sweet must be the remembrance of former days, how many changes and trials had he seen in the course of his pilgrimage, and here did the weary pilgrim rest. On his way to Egypt, did he remember Bethel. (Remember what Solomons says "in all thy ways acknowledge God," and the promise is, "he shall direct thy paths)."

III. Notice JACOB'S VISIONS. He had closed the day by a solemn sacrifice to God, and retired to rest. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob; and he said, Here am I. Jacob had spoken to God in prayer, and God now speaks to him in a vision. God called him by name, by his old name of Jacob, he called him twice

by

by that name, to remind him of that time when he went out from his father's house with his stuff only and slept by the way. Jacob like one well acquainted with the visions of God, knew whose voice it was, and answers Here am I. Speak, Lord, Lord, for thy servant heareth and is ready to obey thy command. Let us hear what God says to Jacob. "I am God, the God of thy father." Cheering words! I am God, thy God, the almighty God, the everlasting, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, the God of thy father. As such Jacob had sought him, he had offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac, and as such he found him to be the God of his father. Thus the covenant he had made with Abraham and Isaac, was renewed to Jacob. "That God would bless him, and make him a blessing, and that in his seed all nations in earth should be blessed." This was comfortable, the good old patriarch must be cheered and revived by it.

2. He had not only comfort but ENCOURAGEMENT to go forward, to proceed on his journey and go down to Egypt. "Fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee

thee a great nation." When he heard of Joseph's life and glory, he resolved without delay to go and see him, yet upon second thoughts he saw some difficulties would attend his journey, and had some fears about it, whether it was right for him to go. Whether it was his duty and the will of God that he should. Jacob had many careful thoughts about this journey. It was a long journey, and he was an old man, 130 years old. He must find this journey a little tedious and painful in his old age. Perhaps he remembered that his beloved Rachel died on a journey, and was fearful that some accident might happen to him before he reached Egypt. Perhaps he was afraid his sons would become idolators and worship the Gods of the Egyptians, as they did afterwards in the wilderness. He was fearful lest they should forget the God of their fathers, and the land of promise, which they were now leaving for some time. He perhaps thought what God had said to Abraham his Grandfather, that they should be strangers in a strange land, and in bondage and affliction for 400 years. He did not wish to die and be buried in Egypt. All these thoughts might

might have occupied his mind during his first day's journey, but they were all silenced and put to rest by God—The promise, when he said, I will go down with thee into Egypt. There was therefore not the least cause for him to fear any evil, while God was with him. This promise was a sufficient encouragement to Jacob to trust that he would do all things well. This was a gracious promise: God had promised that he would multiply him in Egypt, that he would go with him to Egypt, be with him while himself and family dwelt there, and that his family should certainly be brought back from Egypt. When God said I will surely bring thee up again, he did not mean Jacob himself, but his children, because he told Jacob that he should die in Egypt, that beloved Joseph should survive him, and be present to close the eyes of his aged father at his death. Probably this was Jacob's wish, that he might perform this last office of love for him, and if so, God promised to grant him the desire of his heart. Thus God sometimes gratifies the innocent wishes of those that love him, and makes their death not only happy, but the very circumstances of it agreeable

agreeable to their desire. He has often *in a* remarkable manner given many of his people the desire of their hearts with regard to their death.

IV. The MEETING between JOSEPH and his FATHER. After such a Vision as this, no doubt he left Beersheba with a cheerful heart and went on his way with joy: he is now so old as to stand in need of the carriage that Joseph sent him. It is here called a waggon. Jacob was a plain man and a waggon would serve him. There was a time when Jacob set out on a much longer journey than this, with only his staff in his hand, and when he was drawing near to the end of his journey, he sent Judah before him to tell Joseph that his father was come to Goshen. Thus he had the honor of introducing his father and carrying the news of his arrival to his brother. Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet his father at Goshen. Joseph was Governor over all the land, and next to Pharoah, therefore it was right for him to go in his chariot: It was dignified and suitable to the office he sustained, and at the same time it was a mark of respect both to his Father

Father and his Royal Master. The account here given of their meeting together is very affecting. He presented himself to his father, and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. What a tender and dutiful Son. How much he respected and honored his father. The tears which he shed were tears of joy at the sight of his father; they were tears of sincere and strong affection. When we think of it, sure we must almost weep too! His brother Benjamin was very dear to him, but his beloved and venerable parent was dearer still. It was a good while before he could speak—the tender embrace lasted a good while. There is not a Joseph here but is ready to weep too. At last the good old man opened his mouth, and his words show the real satisfaction and pleasure which this meeting was to him: he feels so happy, and he think of nothing but dying. "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive." Perhaps he thought his death was near, but he lived 17 years. He had enjoyed all that he desired in this world; therefore, it was very natural for him to wish to go to another. We must not be surprised at his words. It was a

very common wish, and uttered from the fulness of his joy on this happy event.

IV. Joseph's PRUDENCE and WISE INSTRUCTIONS to his Brethren.

As soon as Joseph could speak, he tells his father and brethren what he intends to do. "I will go up and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren and my father's house which were in the land of Canaan are come unto me: And the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle, and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have." Well, I must now go and tell the King that you are come, and that you are shepherds, and have been so from your youth; and that you have brought your flocks and herds along with you, and then he will be sure to appoint you to live in this part of the country, there being plenty of pasture for your cattle. Here you may live yourselves, a retired and country life. And when he shall call for you, for I know that he will invite you to the palace and wish to see you, and I dare say he will ask you, "What is your occupation, or what trade you are of?" And you must say what I

have

have told you, that you are shepherds, that your trade hath been to feed cattle from your youth even until now, both we and also our fathers. A grazier is a very good business in this country, but it was not thought so in Egypt. I wish you to dwell here, and the king when he hears this, will give you a grant of the land of Goshen. For every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians. This is counted a mean employment, and those that follow it are despised, as unfit for any other employment. See how careful Joseph is to preserve his brethren from the snares to which they are exposed. He could have employed them under himself in the corn trade, he could have procured for them a place in the Court of Pharaoh, or in the Army, but this would have made them proud perhaps, and high minded. It would have caused the envy of the Egyptians also, and they might not be fitted for the station in which they were, and thus they would injure him, and disgrace themselves.

LECTURE XLIX.

PHARAOH'S QUESTION & JACOB'S ANSWER.

GEN. 47. 8, 9.—*And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage.*

JOSEPH having settled every thing with respect to his father and his brethren, and told them what they were to say, when they were sent for into the king's presence, goes to court; and takes five of his brethren, the most handsome of them all, to introduce them to Pharaoh, both out of respect to Pharaoh, affection for his brethren, and to obtain for them a residence or settlement in the land of Goshen. He mentioned to the king that they were come unto that part of his dominions called Goshen, with their flocks and herds. Goshen was a very pleasant country, this was the most fruitful part of all Egypt, especially for

for pasturage, and therefore the most suitable dwelling place for those who had so many cattle. It was situated to the North-east of Egypt, and for the most part eastward of the Nile. The young men appearing in the presence of Pharaoh, he asked them what their business was. Joseph appears to have known that it would be the first thing that he would inquire after. It was a very proper question for him to ask. He took it for granted that they were not brought up in idleness, therefore must be of some occupation, and perhaps one that might be useful to him or his people. Besides, this was not a time for idle people to come to Egypt. It was a time of famine, therefore if they will not work, they must not expect to have bread when it is so scarce; but Pharaoh appears to have asked the question that he might promote them to honor. However they answered they were shepherds, and to this they added, that they were not come to live constantly in the land of Egypt, but merely to sojourn; that is to stay for a certain time in the country with their flocks and herds, which were almost starved because of the severity of the famine, and the scarcity

of grass in the land of Canaan. They concluded by requesting the king to allow them to dwell in the land of Canaan. Pharaoh then turning himself to his favorite counsellor Joseph, thus addressed him:

"Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: The land of Egypt is before thee: in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen, (seeing that they prefer it) let them dwell." This was an instance of Pharaoh's gratitude to Joseph, who had been such a blessing to him and his kingdom, therefore he was kind to his relations for his sake. He left Joseph to make them happy in their own way: and if there were any men of activity, or extraordinary in their business, make them rulers over my cattle, let them have the care and management of my flocks. Pharaoh enquired for active men; men of business; men of diligence and industry, like Joseph; these were the men he would prefer. "Seest thou a man diligent in his business, says Solomon, he shall stand before kings." If they are ingenious or industrious, if they excel, they shall be the chief

shepherds

shepherds of my flocks. Having obtained what he desired for his brethren, he now introduces his aged and venerable father to the king, by way of respect.

I. JACOB PRESENTED TO THE KING OF EGYPT.

When he presented his brethren, they stood before the king, they were young, and it would have been very disrespectful if they had sat in the presence of Pharaoh; but Jacob, in honor of his years and compassion to his infirmities, is placed on a seat before Pharaoh. The good old man beheld Pharaoh sitting in his Royal robes. The sight of a Prince, who had shewn such kindness to himself and family in the time of their distress, calls forth the most lively sensations of gratitude. He salutes the Monarch with respect, and pronounces a blessing on him. How affecting the sight, to behold a venerable good old man, with grey hairs, and a long beard, lifting up his hand to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the true and living God. Jacob had as a Prince had power with God, and prevailed when he wrestled with the An-

gel at Peniel. His blessing was very desirable. Jacob was the son of Abraham, the posterity of Abraham were to be blessings to man. Joseph had been a great blessing to Egypt. God heard his servant Jacob, and no doubt Pharaoh was blessed for his sake. Pharaoh must not only be struck with his appearance, but with his salutation. How different was it from that of Egyptian sages or wise men, how heavenly and divine, how solemn! This is indeed the father of that man, in whom was the Spirit of God. This is no more than what he might expect from Joseph's father.

II. PHARAOH'S QUESTION.

How old art thou? This is a very common question, one that is usually put to persons who are aged. We ought to admire and to revere the aged. "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man," saith the Lord. Jacob's countenance showed him to be very old, for he had been a man of labour and sorrow. People did not live to so great an age in Egypt as they did in Canaan, and therefore Pharaoh looked upon Jacob with wonder and admiration; perhaps he thought him older

than

than he really was, therefore he was curious to know his age. Cultivate respect for the aged.

III. JACOB'S ANSWER to PHARAOH'S QUESTION.

How affecting, how impressive, how uncommon, how instructive! "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." What a remarkable answer. How spiritually minded is the good old patriarch. Only hear and attend, and you must be instructed: Jacob calls his life a pilgrimage, he looked upon himself as a stranger in a foreign country, and as a traveller towards another world; intimating that he was a pilgrim on earth, and that this was not his home; that his habitation and inheritance was in heaven. He confessed at the spot that he was a stranger and a pilgrim, and declared plainly that he not only desired, but sought a better, that is, an heavenly country, to which he was daily advancing like a traveller on a

journey, expecting soon to be at the end of it. He reckoned himself not only a pilgrim, now he was in Egypt, a strange country, where he never was before, but his life even in the land of Canaan was a pilgrimage.

He numbers his life by the "DAYS OF HIS YEARS." For even so it is soon reckoned, and we are not sure of our continuance in this life a single day, we may be turned out of this tabernacle at an hour's notice or warning. A few years, each year composed of a few days, one day runs away after another, and the year is soon gone: thus one year flies away after another till life is ended, with all its many sorrows and pleasures, pains and joys, so that our life like a wearisome journey, grows shorter and shorter till we come to our long home.

The CHARACTER he gives of the days of his years. He says they are "few and evil:" few, though he had now lived an hundred and thirty years, yet he counts them but few when compared with the lives of his forefathers, and they were fewer still when compared with Eternity, the Eternal God, and the eternal state in which a thousand years, longer

longer than any man ever lived, are but as one day. Evil also, for man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward. Job says that man is of few days and full of trouble: others had their trouble, but Jacob had an uncommon share of trouble. Jacob's life had in a more particular manner been made up of evil days, his happiest days were before him. He never was so happy or comfortable in all his life as he is now; he will go down to his grave in peace, instead of sorrow. "Short." He said he had not yet attained to the age of his fathers. Jacob's days were not so many, nor yet so pleasant. Isaac lived to be 180, and Jacob was only 147, when he died; old age had come upon him sooner than on those who had lived before him. Let those who are old remember how short their life is. Remember also that the hoary head is only a crown of glory when it is found in the way of Righteousness. Wicked old men have no reason to be proud of their grey hairs. When they reflect that they have all this time been in the service of Sin and Satan, that they are grown old in the ways of iniquity, their grey hairs should

be their shame and confusion; they indeed have from so venerable a person cause to go sorrowing to the grave: such an answer could not fail to impress the mind of Pharaoh.

IV. JACOB REPEATS HIS BLESSING BEFORE HE DEPARTS FROM THE PRESENCE OF PHARAOH.

"And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh." This was not only an act of civility, but by this he manifested his respect and thanked Pharaoh for his kindness to Joseph, to himself, and his children. This was an act of piety, an exercise of exalted devotion, he prayed for him as one having the authority of a Prophet and a Patriarch. Though Pharaoh was the greatest in worldly wealth and earthly dignity, yet Jacob was the greatest in interest with God, in the riches of his grace; and he was heir to a kingdom which was unmoveable and eternal. Pharaoh had kindly received Jacob. Whether as a prince, or as a Prophet, he received a Prophet's reward, by which he was recompensed for his condescension and his kindness to Jacob and his family.

We

We are not told whether Pharaoh ever saw Jacob again; but if what he said to him impressed his mind at all, he would remember this important answer, and this venerable old man as long as he lived. Joseph having obtained the consent of the King at his command placed his father and his brethren in the situation he intended for them, he gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, and there he continued to nourish his father and his brethren, and all his father's household according to their families. Thus Joseph was made indeed to forget all his toil and all the distresses he had met with in his father's house. By this we not only see that Joseph was a good man, to take so much care of his poor relations, but that God is a good God, he raised him up for this purpose. "It was he that sent a man before them, even Joseph," that he might provide for the necessities of all his father's house, and satisfy them in a time of famine. At the close of the Chapter we are informed of the comfort that Jacob lived in. That while the Egyptians were impoverished, he was replenished in a

strange

strange land: that they had possessions in the land of Goshen, and grew and multiplied exceedingly. Seventeen years Jacob lived in peace in the land of Goshen. Seventeen years he had nourished Joseph when a lad, for he was only so old when he was sold, and now Joseph nourishes his father for seventeen years. And now the time drew nigh that Jacob must die. He is desirous of preparing for it and setting things in order, that when he comes to die he may have nothing to do but to die.—How happy is such a state of mind at such a time! He who had prevailed over the Angel must yield to death, and now he sends for his son and engages him by a solemn oath, not to bury him in Egypt, but in the burying place of his fathers; and Joseph readily consents to his father's request. Joseph had given his father bread, that he might not die by famine, but he is not able to prevent his dying by age or sickness. Jacob died by degrees, his candle was not blown out, but gradually burnt down into the socket; so that he saw at some distance the time drawing nigh. From the 13th to 20th verse, the sacred writer informs us of the state of things in

Egypt

Egypt during the remaining five years of famine and the government of Joseph. The famine was so severe, that to purchase the necessaries of life the inhabitants first parted with all their money, and not only the Egyptians, but the people from the countries round about Egypt, so that the king's treasury became greatly enriched, and when money failed, their cattle were required, and last of all their lands and their persons, save only the lands of their priests or princes, which were not sold: for being according to the laws of the country considered as a part of the Royal household, they were not under the necessity of selling their estates; but were partakers of all the advantages that Pharaoh derived from Joseph. This part of Joseph's conduct has been thought by some very exceptionable, as tending to reduce a nation to poverty and slavery. I am not sure that it was entirely right, though the parties concerned appeared to have cast no reflection upon him. If it were not, it only proves that Joseph though a good and great man, yet was not perfect. But difference of time and circumstance may render us incompetent to judge correctly concerning his conduct.

The

The following remarks, if they do not wholly exculpate him from blame, may at least serve greatly to extenuate the evil of his conduct.

1. He does not appear to have been employed by the country, but by the king only, and that for himself. He did not buy up the corn during the years of plenty at the public expence, but he paid the people for it out of the king's private purse.

2. If the Egyptians had believed the word of God, as the king did, they had the same opportunity as he had, and might have laid by grain enough, during the seven plentiful years, fully to have supplied their own wants during the years of famine; but they disregarded the dreams and the interpretation, as people did the preparations of Noah; the only use they made of the plenty, was to waste it in luxury as it came. It was just therefore, that they should now feel some of the consequences.

3. In supplying their wants it was absolutely necessary to distribute the provisions not by *gift*, but by *sale*, and that according to what we should call the market price, otherwise the whole would have been consumed in half the time and the country would have perished.

4. The slavery to which they were reduced, was merely that of being tenants to the king, who accepted of one fifth of the produce for his rent; indeed it was scarcely possible for a whole nation to be greatly oppressed, without being driven to redress themselves, and probably what they paid aforetimes as rent, was much the same thing as we pay in taxes, and enable the king to maintain his state and support his government without any other burden. There is no mention made, I believe, in history of this event producing ill effects upon the country.

5thly. Whatever he did, it was not for himself or his kindred, but for the king, by whom he was employed. The utmost therefore that can be made of it to his disadvantage, does not affect the disinterestedness of his character.—*Fuller.*

REMARKS. Ask the children how old they are, and then tell them how old such children were that we read of in the scriptures, that were God's children, that did any thing remarkable.

LECTURE

LECTURE L.

JOSEPH'S VISIT TO HIS SICK FATHER.

GEN. 48. 1. 7.—*And it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.*

And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee. And Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed.

A VISIT to the sick man's chamber has often been very useful both to old and young. There are many important lessons to be learnt, especially from those who fear God, who have served him from childhood even unto old age. (Perhaps this was a reason among others why Joseph took his two sons with him, when he went to see his sick father.) It is our duty to visit those who are sick, we may have an opportunity either to do good, or to get good. The sick-bed is the place where we may either administer comfort and advice to others, or receive instruction ourselves. If we visit a sick friend whom we love, it is kindly taken, it revives and cheers those who are in pain, to see that they are not

not forgotten by those they love. Joseph took his two sons with him that they might receive their dying grandfather's blessing, that what they might see in him and hear from him, might make a lasting impression on their minds. It is good for young people to visit the aged saints of God, that they may hear their dying testimony to the goodness of God and the pleasures of true religion. This will greatly encourage those who are but babes in grace and years, who have but just begun to walk the heavenly road to everlasting bliss. I dare say Manasseh and Ephraim would never forget this visit as long as they lived. Pious parents are desirous of a blessing for their children as well as themselves. Joseph had been more kind and tender to his father, than all his brethren, and Jacob BLESSED him and his children with peculiar blessings above the rest. When he blessed Joseph, he felt his heart enlarged. It was a subject on which the good old man delighted to dwell, he poured upon him the blessings of Almighty God, the God of his Father, who should bless him with the blessings of heaven above; blessings of the deep

that

that lieth under; blessings of the breasts and womb; the blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessing of thy progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills, they shall be upon the head of Joseph and on the crown of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. This is the painful but endearing circumstance which drew down upon his head, all these numerous blessings from his father Jacob.

I. JOSEPH'S VISIT TO HIS DYING FATHER.

Jacob, though most likely confined to his bed, did not die immediately after having sent for Joseph, to request him not to bury him in Egypt. Joseph therefore returned to his important employment, but hearing that he was worse and expecting his death, he went to visit him, and took with him his two sons, who were now about twenty years of age. On hearing that his beloved son was come to see him, he is said to have strengthened himself and sat up in his bed. The mention of his name, cheers his mind, animates his spirit, and he seems to obtain new life and vigour; he exerted all his strength

that

that he might improve this last opportunity. As far as he was able, he roused his spirits and stirred up the gift of prophecy that was in him. The spirit of Jacob sustained the infirmity of his years, he sat upon the bed, and put forth his remaining bodily strength to the utmost, that he might appear as cheerful and lively as possible. Without any delay while his strength lasts and time is given him, he relates to Joseph the promise that God made to him at Luz in the land of Canaan, that is Bethel, where Jacob had that delightful dream, where God perhaps first appeared to him and blessed him, and said, "Behold I will make thee fruitful and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and I will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession." God had here promised two things, a numerous posterity, and the land of Canaan, for an inheritance: these two things are mentioned, as belonging to Joseph and his children. And when Jacob mentioned the land of Canaan, as the promised land, he intended, that Joseph should look upon Egypt as a resting-

place,

place, and not an abiding habitation; he intended to remind him of what he had said to Pharaoh, that like his father he might live like a pilgrim on the earth. It is this glorious promise, which occupies the chief attention of the dying Patriarch; that promise which included in it all the goodness, that God intended to bestow on the world, in the fullness of time, that in the ages to come he might shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us thro' Christ Jesus.

II. JACOB'S ADOPTION OF JOSEPH'S SONS.

How solemn! "And now (from this time, henceforth and for ever) thy two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee, in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt, *are mine.*" Not only as my grand children, but I adopt them, as my own children, that being numbered among my own sons, they may as heads of two distinct tribes have their share in Canaan, the promised land. As Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine, as dear as Reuben and Simeon, as honorable as Reuben and Simeon, as numerous as Reuben and Simeon, and like them shall they be

heads

heads of two different tribes. I appoint them heads of tribes, and they shall be considered as entitled to two seperate portions of the promised inheritance on that account. "And thy issue which thou begettest after them, shall be thine and shall be called after the name of their brethren, in their inheritance." That is, if he had any more children, they should not be accounted heads of tribes like Ephraim and Manasseh, they should fall in with either the one or the other. We do not find that Joseph had any more children, and if he had, according to direction they must be numbered among the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. It was wise in Jacob to give this direction, and thus not only to provide for what might happen, but also to prevent confusion and strife.

Jacob then relates to Joseph, the account of the death and burial of his mother, Rachel, the best beloved wife of his father. Verse 7. He tells him, where she died and where he buried her, that his children might perhaps visit at some future time, the mournful spot. The manner in which he introduced this subject, shows how much he laid it to

heart.

heart. "As for me," this seems to be produced with a sigh! Ah me! he still seemed to feel the anguish of that painful stroke, and mentions it as a reason, why he so tenderly loved her two children, Benjamin and Joseph. He loved Rachel best, and he loved her children best. This may perhaps account for the double portion he bestowed on Joseph. Rachel was in the most proper sense, his wife, and therefore in this sense, Joseph was his first-born son.

III. JACOB BLESSES THE SONS OF JOSEPH, EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH.

While Jacob was talking to Joseph, concerning himself and his sons, not knowing that they were with him, he had spoken of them as absent, but turning to Joseph and seeing some others with him, though he could not well discern who they were, his eyes being dim with age, therefore he enquires, who they were. "And Joseph said unto his father, they are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place." What a pious answer! how becoming to magnify the goodness of God! He says in *this place*—where I was banished, sold for a slave and imprisoned. On this he requests them to be brought unto him that

that he may bless them; though he could scarcely see them, yet his heart was full of tenderness for them, for their father's sake, therefore he kissed and embraced them. See how fond Jacob is of Joseph's children. It is very common for old people to have a particular affection for their grand children, perhaps more than they had for their own when they were little. Solomon gives this reason for it. "Children's children are the crown of old men." With what satisfaction does Jacob look upon Ephraim and Manasseh as being the children of his beloved Joseph: being full of holy affection he looks back upon his past sorrows, and admiring the goodness and grace of God, he says to Joseph, "I had not thought to see thy face, and lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed." How much better is God to us than we deserve! How often does he make the cup of real joy to run over!

2. After this affectionate embrace, Joseph brought his sons forth from between his father's knees, and bowed himself with his face to the earth; thus he not only showed the respect and veneration which he had for his aged parent, but he thanked him for his kindness

kindness to his children in adopting them as his own, and showed the high value which he set upon his father's blessing. "And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand towards Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand towards Israel's right hand, and thus he brought them to his father to receive his blessing." Perhaps he had observed that his father spoke of Ephraim as the firstborn and put him before his brother Manasseh, who was the elder; thinking his father had made a mistake, he placed the young men according to their ages.

3. But only observe, my dear children, the PECULIAR MANNER in which Jacob blessed them. He crossed his hands by the direction of God; that it was by the direction of God is evident, for Jacob could not distinguish Ephraim from Manasseh. And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly (that is knowing what he did), for Manasseh was the first born. Thus Jacob crossed his hands and preferred the younger before the first born. Grace does not observe the order of nature. God does not alway prefer those whom *we think*

think should be preferred, but acts according to his own will. It is very remarkable that God often advanced the younger above the elder, by his particular favor. Abel above Cain, Shem above Japhet, Abraham above Nahor and Haran, Isaac above Ishmael, Jacob above Esau, Judah and Joseph above Reuben, Moses before Aaron, David before his elder brethren, and Solomon after him. Gentile converts were more numerous than those of the Jews.

4. The BLESSING itself. In this manner he proceeded to bless them: "And he blessed Joseph and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which led me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." Here he recounts the experience of God's goodness to him, the visits he made him, and the constant care he had taken of him. He blessed them in the name of their father and in the name of their grandfather's God, a God who loved them and was loved and served by them,

thine

thine own friend and thy father's friend. Forsake not, says Solomon, *thine* own God; and the God of thy fathers forsake not, says Jacob. This God is called the Angel who redeemed him from evil, meaning the Angel with whom he wrestled and prevailed, before he met Esau his brother, whom he was so much afraid of; concerning whom he said I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved.—The blessing of that God is invoked on them, their forefathers' names put on them, and an abundant increase promised to them.

The circumstance of Jacob crossing his hands displeased Joseph, he endeavored to remove his father's hands, at the same time informing him in what manner they ought to be placed; but Jacob, who had been guided by an unseen hand, refusing to listen to his son Joseph, said to him, "I know it my son, I know it," I have not made a mistake. I am not partial to one any more than the other, what I have done is according to the will of God "He (Manasseh.) shall be great; but truly this young brother (Ephraim) shall be greater than he." Then he added to his former blessing: "In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh."

IV.

IV. JACOB'S ADDRESS TO JOSEPH.

"I die, said Israel, but God shall be with you and bring you again to the land of your forefathers." He left Joseph this promise, that they should return out of Egypt as a sacred truth. And this promise when Joseph died he left with his brethren. It was intended to break off their attachment to Egypt, and to fix their faith in the promise of the land of Canaan. He bestowed on Joseph one portion above his brethren as a token of his special love. A parcel of ground which had been originally bought of the sons of Hamon, was afterwards seized by some of their posterity, and was therefore recovered by force of arms. This portion he gave to Jacob, and the tribe of Ephraim afterwards possessed it, and the lot was not cast upon it. In this portion Joseph's bones were at length buried. Being thus obtained with the sword and bow of his father, at the hazard of his life, it was no doubt doubly precious and valuable in the sight of Joseph to whom it was given; he would certainly prize what was acquired at so much expence.

LECTURE LI.

JACOB'S BURIAL AND JOSEPH'S DEATH.

GEN. 50. 5. & 26. *My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old, and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.*

GOOD old Jacob, after he had blessed his children, gave them directions concerning his funeral. He had before mentioned his funeral only to his beloved Joseph, but now he mentions it to all his children. He desired to be buried in the land of Canaan, in the burying place of his fathers, the Cave of Machpelah, where they had buried Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and where he had buried Leah the sister of Rachel, his beloved wife; he would no doubt gladly have buried Rachel in this sacred tomb; but the circumstances in which she died, obliged him to bury her on the spot, and the distance did not permit of her being carried to that place. Jacob did not wish to be buried by the side of his beloved wife, but dying in faith, he chose to mingle his dust with that of Abraham and Isaac, who had been heirs with him of the same promise. And now

now having said all that he had to say to his children, and finished all the directions and commands he intended to give; he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people. Jacob sat on the side of his bed to bless his children, and when he had finished his blessing and his charge, "he gathered up his feet," that is, he lay down in the bed in a composed frame of mind, and in a dying posture, not as one patiently waiting for the time of his departure from the present world, but he composed himself as one lying down to rest, and cheerfully resigned his spirit into the hands of him who gave it; he died in peace, and his soul ascended to mingle with the spirits of the just made perfect, whose faith is turned to sight. Thus died Jacob, (says Mr. Fuller) a man whose conduct on some occasions was blameable, whose life was filled up with numerous changes, but whose latter end was peace. His was indeed the death of a righteous man. His children might have uttered Balaam's wish, when they saw their father's end. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." O! happy Jacob!

I. NOTICE THE PREPARATIONS MADE BY JOSEPH FOR HIS FATHER'S FUNERAL.

Jacob was told at Beersheba, that Joseph should put his hand upon his eyes. He not only did this, but in the fulness of his affection and sorrow, "He fell upon his father's face, after he was dead, and wept upon him, and kissed him." Thus he pays his last respects to his departed father. With tears and kisses, and all the tender expressions of filial affection, he takes leave of the deserted body. Though Jacob was old and poor, and, according to the course of nature and decay of age, Joseph had no reason to expect his father's continuance any longer in a present life; yet he was so sensible of the loss of a prudent, pious, praying father, that he could not part with him without floods of tears. The departed soul is out of the reach of our tears and kisses. Thus it is that we must take a long and sad farewell of all those whom we dearly love, by kissing their pale and cold lips, and whom we again hope to see at the resurrection of the just.

Having done this, Joseph orders his body to be embalmed with sweet spices, which

was

was accordingly done; this art was carried to great perfection in Egypt, and by it bodies are preserved from putrefaction, and it is performed in such a manner as to preserve the very features of the face entire. This was the custom among the Egyptians. It was not only an honour to such a great and good man, but he was to be carried to Canaan, which was so far distant from Egypt, that it was necessary that the body should be preserved. A solemn mourning was observed, by his families and the Egyptians also, of forty days. Forty days were taken up in embalming the body, and to this was added another month, so that they mourned for him seventy days. This was not only intended as an honour to *Jacob*, but also to shew their respect for *Joseph*; the Egyptians, the Court and the Nobility went into mourning. All this time they confined themselves to their houses and sat solitary, and when they went out appeared in the habit of close mourning, according to the custom of the country. About ten weeks the Court of Egypt was in mourning for Jacob, to shew their sympathy and respect.

Joseph

Joseph requests leave of Pharaoh to go and bury his father. For this purpose he desired leave of absence from business for a short time, and requested Pharaoh to grant him permission: this was respectful to the King and necessary to himself, because he was a man of dignity and importance, filling a high station which required all his time. Joseph applies to some of the royal attendants of Pharaoh to obtain this request for him, thereby he honored the King and gained the esteem of those around, or perhaps it was not proper for him, being a mourner, to appear in the King's presence. "Modesty is a great ornament to dignity." The plea he made use of was, that his father made him swear by a solemn oath, that he would bury him in Canaan. It was not pride, but duty, that induced him to make this request; he promised to return again, and therefore Pharaoh granted his petition and said, "Go up and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear."

II.—THE FUNERAL OF JACOB.

"And Joseph went up to bury his father."

This

This was a *stately* funeral. The whole family except their little ones, all the elders of the court, and the elders of the country, all the respectable persons and great men of the kingdom, with chariots and horsemen in their train. It was a very great company, not only in number, but in rank and quality. It is said to be the most grand and magnificent funeral that was ever recorded in history. This universal esteem and honor was shown to the Patriarch in token of gratitude for Joseph, and it shows us the high esteem which the Egyptians had for him, and that they considered him as one of the greatest benefactors of their country. Thus will God honor those, both living and after death, who honor him.

This was a *sorrowful* funeral; nothing remarkable happened till they came to the thrashingfloor of Atad, which was beyond Jordan in the land of Canaan, and not many miles from the Cave of Machpelah, the place of interment. Here they stayed seven days to perform some funeral solemnities; here they mourned with great and sore lamentation. It was so great as to attract the attention of the Canaanites,

who

who, when they saw and heard what passed, observed one to another, "This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians:" for such they considered them to be: seeing they came from Egypt. This sorrowful lamentation for Jacob gave a new name to the place where it happened, they called the name of the place Abel Mizraim, that is, the mourning of the Egyptians.

This was a very *respectful* funeral. There was more respect paid to Jacob than to the Kings of Israel and Judah when they died; all we read concerning their funerals is that they were buried with their fathers in the city of David. The death of good men is a great loss, they ought to be honored and respected. Thus his sons obeyed the command of their father and buried him in the place where he had requested them. After the funeral, they returned to Egypt, and all the great company that went with them. And now Joseph's brethren, thinking that all the kindness he had shewn to them was on account of their father and for his sake, and that perhaps he had never forgiven them in his heart,

heart, now that their father was dead, he would feel the same hatred to them for their treatment of him as they had done to him on account of his dreams; thinking that he would certainly revenge the evil they had done to him, their minds were full of fears and forboding apprehensions, and they suspected the sincerity and constancy of Joseph's favor. They therefore sent a deputation unto him, perhaps two of their number, Judah and Benjamin.

III. THE DEPUTATION OF JOSEPH'S BRETHREN.

They sent messengers unto Joseph. Why did they send messengers? To sound him, to hear what he would say, because they were afraid of his anger and desired the continuance of his favor. Who were the messengers? We are not told. How delicate, how cautious, how tender is the message which they send. They introduce themselves, not by informing him of their fears, but as acting in obedience to the commands of their departed father. Thy father did command before his death, that we should send this message, and say thus and thus unto thee. It was not possible to be

offended with them for obeying his father's orders, they send to tell him what their father said, and present their petition as coming from him, "so shall ye say to Joseph: Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren and their sins, for they did unto thee evil:"—Joseph could not refuse their father's desire—to their father's request they unite their own confession and petition, they speak of it with sorrow, "and now we pray thee forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy Father." This was proper and done in so moving a manner, that it must make a deep impression on Joseph's tender heart. It was enough for them to have mentioned their being the children of the same father, and he had made it his dying request to them, but when they declared themselves to be the servants of their father's God, knowing their brother Joseph to be a man that feared God, they knew that he would treat them with peculiar tenderness on this account, because both Joseph and themselves served the same Master. We must not wonder at what we read. "And Joseph wept, when they spake unto him." He

wept

wept at their suspicion of his love and at the very humble manner in which they beg his pardon. But this is not all, they come, they weep, and they fall down before his face and offer to be his servants. See here the humiliation of his brethren and the accomplishment of the dreams. The sun was set and the moon gone down to the silent chamber of the grave, the eleven stars only remain, and they do obeisance to Joseph. His mind seems to have been rather hurt, and at this extreme abasement of his brethren, his feelings were greatly exercised. It appears too much. "Fear not, says he, for am I in the place of God?" Do not be afraid. It is not for me a poor sinful creature to presume to execute that vengeance which belongs to God alone, from me you have no evil, no punishment to fear. I have already pardoned your offence, and if you need any more to be forgiven, you must seek not from me but from God. "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring to pass as it is this day to save much people alive." Your fears are groundless. I tell you now what I said to you seventeen years ago, I mean what I said then, I

have passed over what you have done to me, and I shall not think of it again, I shall not love you the less, nor treat you the worse on that account. "Now therefore, fear ye not, I will nourish you and your little ones," I will not be your master but your brother, yea, I will be a father to your families and nourish your children as my own. In this manner did Joseph comfort their hearts and speak kindly to them, that every fear might be removed from their minds. Happy Joseph, with how much pleasure and tenderness dost thou forgive the tresspass of thy brethren; they must indeed think themselves happy, who are blessed with such a brother as Joseph. Follow his example and forgive the faults or injuries which your brothers and sisters commit against you.

IV. JOSEPH'S AGE AND DEATH.

Joseph was about fifty six years old when his father died, and he lived to be an hundred and ten, during which time he lived to see the children of Ephraim unto the third generation, and the grand children of Manasseh were brought up as it were on Joseph's knees, an expression which signifies

signifies the affection he had for them, and the pleasure he took in them; probably he saw his two sons solemnly owned as heads of distinct tribes, equal to any of his brethren. What a mercy it was that Joseph lived so long to be a support and comfort to his brethren; he had honoured his father, and his days were indeed long in the land of Egypt which God had given him for a residence at present, and now the time draws nigh that Joseph also must die. The wisest and best of men must be laid in the grave.

"Princes, this clay must be your bed,
In spite of all your towers;
The tall, the wise, the reverend head,
Must lie as low as ours."

Joseph died in faith, being persuaded of the promise which God had made to his Father Jacob. He here repeats it to his brethren —"I die, and God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swear to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." Under the expectation of the fulfilment of this promise Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, "God will

will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." Thus when they departed from Egypt, we are told that Moses took the bones of Joseph with him. "By faith Joseph when he died made mention of the departing of the children of Israel and gave commandment concerning his bones." Heb. 11.—22. Having said all he wished to say, he died, being an hundred and ten years old, and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. Such is the History of Joseph, such is the remarkable life and such the peaceful death of Pharaoh's prime Minister. Eighty years did he fill this honorable office, and faithfully discharged the duties which were laid upon him. He feared God and honoured the King. He honored his parents and lived long in the land—May you live like him in the fear of God, and though you may not be raised to dignity and honor like Joseph, yet you shall be distinguished by a much more honorable title—you shall be called the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, you may live in humble poverty, you may die in a mud-wall cottage; but after death you shall be made priests and kings

unto

unto God and the Lamb, thro' the merits and intercession of your elder brother. O, my dear young friends, let us pause while we reflect on the interesting History to which we have been listening. Let not Joseph be forgotten; imitate his example, walk in his steps, serve his God, and display the same affection for your parents and your brothers and sisters as he did. Then at last when you come to die, you shall go to heaven and live with God, and Joseph, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE END.

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